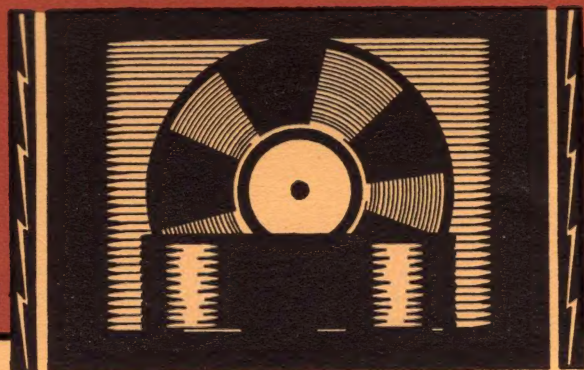


*The*

JULY, 1937

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# AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER



RECORDS

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EDITED BY PETER HUGH REED



# RECORD BUYER'S GUIDE OF THE NATION'S MOST RELIABLE DEALERS

These shops, fully endorsed by The American Music Lover, are equipped to take excellent care of your record requirements.

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# The American Music Lover

A MUSICAL CONNOISSEUR'S MAGAZINE

JULY

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## EDITORIAL

**D**ESPITE the enormous growth of and the widely increasing interest in recorded music, there still seem to be many shops throughout the country which do not stock all essential record releases of the month. And yet most of these stores profess to deal in records. Such apprehension and distrust of record merchandise might have been wholly justified a few years back, but today it seems hardly more than partly justified.

The wide education of the music loving public via radio and records in the past decade has definitely altered the status of the record buyer. For the majority today are unquestionably interested, firstly, in good music—worthwhile music; secondly, in authenticity of performance; and lastly, in first-rate recording and a smooth record surface.

During our recent tour from coast to coast, we visited and talked with the sales force and the management of many record shops. It was our impression that all were making every effort to cooperate to the utmost with the record buyer. However, many of our readers write us from time to time that they are unable to obtain some of the important record releases of the month through their local dealer. Because we aim to assist our readers at all times, and because we endeavor to bring to the phonograph companies' attention the desires of their record buyers, we invite those who encountered difficulties to tell us about them. If certain album sets are not stocked by your local dealer let us know, and we may be able to assist you.

We wish to point out at this time that this thought is applicable primarily to those dealers who receive enough demands for merchandise of this type to justify their stocking it. There are also many dealers, particularly in small places, who rightly feel justified in not carrying a large stock, but who could at the same time more adequately serve their customers by displaying a willingness to obtain such merchandise on order in the shortest

(Continued on Page 86)

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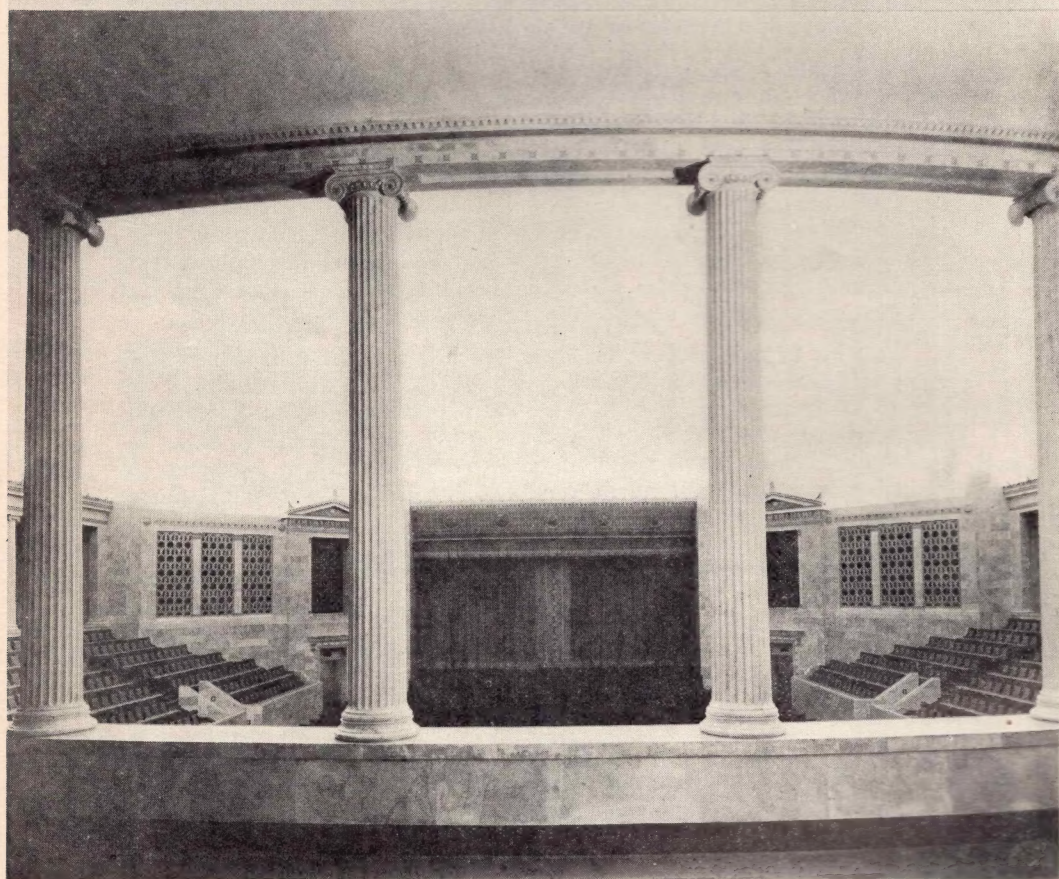
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Above: Exterior view of the Toledo Museum of Art with entrance to the Peristyle on the left.

Below: Interior of the Peristyle from the rear. Note the sky-line dome which is most effectively illuminated by indirect lighting.



# The Toledo Museum of Art

*(Editor's Note: We intend to present some highlights of the activity and energy of musical life in America as we discovered it in our lecture trip ahead of the recent Philadelphia Orchestra tour. The following is a note on the Toledo Museum of Art, where we had the privilege of lecturing during the month of May, and also on its famous concert hall, which is the most beautiful it has been our pleasure to see either in this country or in Europe. Next month we shall discuss the organization and function of The Gramophone Society of Dallas, Texas.)*

THE Toledo Museum of Art, founded by the late Edmund Drummond Libbey, has performed a unique function in the direction of allying music with the other arts. In 1931 the inception of the Music Department inaugurated the effort to educate Toledoans, particularly the youth of the city, in the appreciation and understanding of fine music.

In 1933, when the enlarged Museum was opened, the east wing was given over to the magnificent Greek Peristyle and its appurtenances. The hall seats 1500 persons normally, and in addition to its classical beauty and unusually adequate stage, is outstanding for its acoustical properties. The Peristyle has won the enthusiastic praise of music leaders the world over, many of them venturing to single it out as the finest concert hall known. In addition to the Peristyle proper, the east wing of the Museum houses promenades, lounges, dressing rooms, and even a broadcasting studio.

Two concerts by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski conducting, in January, 1933, served to dedicate the Peristyle in a fitting manner. The standard of musical events set by this offering has been maintained in the annual Museum Concert Series during the winter months. Outstanding symphony orchestras, chamber music, individual musicians, and singers are brought to the Peristyle each year with a very nominal subscription fee charged to Toledo music lovers to cover the costs of the concert. During the 1936-37 season Kirsten Flagstad; the Cleveland Orchestra; Ruggiero Ricci; the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra; Ethel Bartlett and Rae Robertson; the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Georges Enesco conducting; and the famed pianist Josef Hofmann were heard.

A complimentary concert is given each year for members of the Toledo Museum of

Art and for musicians who have participated in the weekly free Sunday afternoon concerts. Symphony orchestras appearing on these occasions in the past have been the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Orchestra, and the Boston Orchestra. For the Members' Concert last winter the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Serge Koussevitzky, appeared in the Peristyle.

The Museum occasionally arranges extra musical events during the season. Last winter Toledoans had the opportunity to see the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe, whose performance in the Peristyle is becoming almost a tradition, and to hear a concert on Sunday, May 16, by the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy.

A special feature of the Museum's music work, made possible from time to time through the cooperation of symphonic organizations appearing on the regular concert series, is the children's concerts, given in the afternoon. The Saturday before one of these musical treats the children who attend the regular Saturday morning music appreciation classes hear a discussion by Mary Van Doren, head of the Music Department and accomplished pianist, of the program to be played for them. These youngsters are divided into three age groups. After the talk they are given free tickets to the children's concert.

It is of interest that Miss Van Doren uses recordings extensively in her music appreciation classes, and that the Museum owns the Carnegie Fund record collection and one of their especially built phonographs. An example of the selections specially planned for the young listeners is Haydn's *Farewell Symphony*, played in February by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, in which the music is dramatized by the carrying of lighted candles and the musicians' leaving the stage one by

*(Continued on Page 95)*



# Some Thoughts on Transcribed Bach

By GEORGE A. BREWSTER

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Apparently Bach transcriptions are a major issue, along with the Supreme Court, the labor troubles, and the question of which needles are best. The following article started a battle among the editorial staff and when the dust settled it was decided that Mr. Broder would fire an answering gun in an early issue. Bringing this controversy into the open may not solve anything, but it is our belief that it will at least clarify the issues involved.)

**C**ONTROVERSY does much to keep musical vital. The pro- and anti-Brucknerites are fond of flying at each other's throats; the Wagnerians and the Brahmsians, even today, perform a good deal of mutual hair-pulling. And what tea-pot tempests we have over the melodic gifts of Berlioz. But if it is a real storm you desire, a cyclone of epithet and wrath, just mention So-and-so's transcription of Bach's Prelude and Fugue in This-or-that minor. If you live, you will not soon forget it.

There is very good reason for this violent difference of opinion. Bach, especially in his organ works, has written music that is appealing to the modern spirit. Hence — were this music to languish on library shelves, or were it to be heard only within the confines of the church, the eager concert-goer would be deprived of some of the most magnificent music ever written. Let us therefore, logically reasons the transcriber, adapt it so that it can be heard in the concert hall.

There are two ways in which to transcribe a Bach organ composition. One method adheres as closely as possible to the original, and nothing is done which could not be done on an organ. In fact, certain transcriptions alone provide even less tone-color and variety than a gifted organist can extract from his instrument. The other method is to utilize all the tricks and devices of the modern orchestra, striving for a polychromatic, gigantic effect. This method is the more difficult to handle, and evokes the greatest criticism.

But what are the most violent objections to transcription? The purists say that the character of a work such as a Bach fugue is completely changed in the process. But

it is impossible, since the most important characteristics of the composition — the melody, the harmony, the counterpoint — are transferred, *intact*, to the transcription. I don't believe I'm uttering such a rank heresy when I state that tone-color is of less importance in contrapuntal music than in the music of, say, Berlioz. Few instruments have less in common with the pianoforte than the violin as far as actual sound is concerned: yet Bach himself turned several of his violin concertos into piano concertos without change other than to transpose them a half-tone! Of course this is not to say that any tenth-rate hack may do what Bach did, yet one cannot wholly overlook the precedents that Johann Sebastian established.

Then there is the cry of "Desecration!" raised whenever any tinkering is done to an established masterpiece. To me this attitude is, even when sincere, based on a false premise. If a cartoonist chose to burlesque a Rubens painting to make a comic holiday we are amused or slightly annoyed, according to the skill of the cartoonist. We do not, unless we are dunces, tear up the stairs to the editor's office with a rope in our hands, shouting "Desecration!" Why is this? Because (and this is the vital point) the original painting remains untouched. We can still admire the breathless beauty of the Rubens masterpiece no matter what vulgar ink-splasher chooses to make a parody of it. And so with music. A masterpiece can withstand the onslaught of arrangers for jew's-harp and ocarina. A Paul Whiteman fox-trot adaptation of Liszt's *Third Liebestraum* has always seemed to me absolutely justifiable inasmuch as there is nothing to prevent the offended auditor from hearing the untainted original until he grows as tired of it as most of us have already become.



Recorded transcriptions for orchestra of Bach's organ works are not very plentiful: aside from the copious Stokowski series, but three or four orchestrators are represented on a scant half dozen discs. However, sufficient interest is to be found in available discs to make up for their paucity. To start at the beginning: The first important Bach transcription to appear on records was the sensational Elgar *Fantasia and Fugue in C Minor*, issued about twelve years ago, the transcription itself dating from 1921-22. A newer version, appearing in 1929 or 1930, is found on H. M. V. record D-1560, by Coates and the London Symphony; it is a fairly satisfactory recording. It is quite evident that if this work is sensational, Elgar meant it to be so. The fugue is scored in such a manner that it must sound sensational. The lyric, almost melancholy, fantasia consists mainly of a kind of dialogue between strings and woodwinds, gradually reaching a climax at which the brasses enter. A quiet chromatic passage very like the chromatic scale accompaniment which plays such an important part in the fugue ends the fantasia inquiringly on the dominant. The fugue has an extraordinarily vigorous subject, one that would appeal to the composer of the *Cockaigne Overture*; it is announced not unconventionally by the strings and clarinets in unison. Later Elgar takes it upon himself to embroider Bach's notes with his own rapid, running string accompaniment in demi-semiquavers. It is audacious, but it fits; it does not obscure the original counterpoint as much as one might expect. The middle section, in which the chromatic scale is so skillfully used by Bach, seems to come out even better than on the organ: there is a massiveness in the low brasses that the organ (at least when recorded) does not appear to possess. In the two measures of trill which climax the chromatic passages Elgar was faced with the problem of disposing of the untrillable trombones. This he did by boldly writing a series of shakes which must be seen to be appreciated. At the final measures, Elgar lets everything loose, topping it with a staccato, fortissimo triplet for the whole band that lifts the audience out of its seat. The final diminished seventh with its dissonant tonic pedal-point is translated into a *pp* to *ff* crescendo fittingly to close a truly exciting work.

Let us consider next the famous *Toccat and Fugue in D Minor*, orchestrated by Leopold Stokowski. Admittedly this is a *tour-de-force*; yet so completely does it absorb the listener, even after repeated hearings, that it

seems amply justified. Unlike Elgar, this transcriber concerns himself only with Bach. This does not mean that his work is therefore superior, but it has, I believe, more claim to authenticity, if any transcription can be said to have that virtue. Critics of this work have said that its tremendous driving impact is out of sympathy with the spirit of Bach, yet this overpowering force is so evident in the original organ work that such fault-finding is merely picayune. There is nothing in this orchestration that you don't hear in the organ version. This is not to say that the orchestral version does or should sound like an organ (although those woodwinds in octaves at the start of the toccata resemble uncannily the organ's tones); for such a course would be a mere trick. But the translation of the polyphony to the orchestra has been so clearly done that it seems to me this arrangement should stand as a model of its type. If it is theatrical and dramatic, it is because Bach wrote it that way, and Stokowski would be unwise to tone it down to the dynamic level of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. Stokowski's choice and changes of tempo have been much criticized, yet it is interesting to note that there is much sharper disagreement about tempo among the half-dozen organists who have recorded this composition in its original form. (The Stokowski record is Victor 8697).

There is another record of the *Toccat and Fugue* for orchestra: English Decca K-768. The instrumentation here is by a certain "Klenovsky", who was some time ago revealed as Sir Henry Wood; his New Queen's Hall Orchestra is the performer. This version is about as full of monkeyshines as any organ piece has ever been subjected to. Where Stokowski impresses you, in the toccata, with the sheer sonority and tonal splendor of the orchestra, Wood finds it necessary to insert snare drum, chime, tam-tam, and glockenspiel. Where Stokowski keeps a steady pace throughout the fugue, Wood about halfway through, almost doubles the time value of the notes. Then, to bring himself back to his original tempo, he gradually accelerates the pace so that the effect is practically the same as that of a starting locomotive. The subsequent statement of the subject by the brasses in unison is positively funny. The fantasia-like section just before the coda is handled in a percussive manner not dissimilar to Elgar's treatment of like material in the *C Minor Fugue*. Altogether this transcription is as clownish as anything of its kind. A score of text-books could not disclose as much



about differences between Wood's and Stokowski's methods as a comparison of these two discs. Certainly Stokowski depends less upon extraneous percussive ornament than either Wood or Elgar.

Arnold Schoenberg is another transcriber who sometimes lets the orchestra get out of hand. The *Prelude and Fugue in E Flat Major* (issued on two German Telefunken discs) is, however, a towering edifice which needs an elaborate orchestral guise to do it justice. The prelude is a lengthy, almost ponderous affair, with a pompous close that resembles a national anthem of some sort. The fugue, a complex one, provides apt material for the undeniable orchestral skill of Schoenberg. The "division of labor" amongst the sections of the orchestra, while simple, is extremely effective, so well does it clarify this fugue's unusual form. In one episode Schoenberg italicises the re-entry of the first subject by scoring it for, of all things, the xylophone. If this be treason, make the most of it, for this device without doubt brings to light an important point which might otherwise have been buried underneath a welter of polyphony. Unfortunately the closing portions suffer from a bad case of elephantiasis, and Bach's counterpoint, instead of being clarified, is obscured by massive chords for full band made no less overwhelming by the addition of an organ. Taken as a whole, this transcription is a combination of both over- and under-scoring, with the latter providing the most effective and interesting parts.

Concert-goers may have encountered a rather puzzling opus entitled *Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue in G minor*, by "Bach-Abert." This juicy tid-bit, as yet unrecorded, marks an all-time low in Bach dis-arrangement. The prelude is taken without rhyme or reason from the *Forty-Eight*; the chorale is an original one by Abert, and the fugue is the "Great" G minor. Not satisfied with this melange, Abert has seen fit to use the chorale theme contrapuntally in the fugue itself! The result is that the wonderful contrapuntal development in the fugue is almost obliterated by the impudent chorale theme, which the brasses bellow above everything else. One must necessarily be entirely ignorant of the purposes of fugal writing to enjoy this bit of musical charlatanism; yet this Abert piece has been quite popular at summer orchestral and band concerts. Perhaps this proves something.

A certain composition recently recorded by the Minneapolis Orchestra (Victor discs 8924-25) has, it seems to me, a far greater claim to be called "transcribed Bach" than the Abert work. The *Chorale and Fugue in D minor*, by Zemachson, gives the illusion of sounding more like Bach than Bach does. The fugue's subject is a variation of that of the "Great" G minor, and the entire development is provokingly similar to Bach's. Yet this opus, for all its lack of originality, is so skillfully worked out that the result is most agreeable.

The reader will observe that my examples have been taken only from transcribed fugues and preludes-and-fugues. This was done mainly to provide as homogeneous a basis for comparison as possible; it also prevents too great a concentration upon a single prolific transcriber. The fugue represents the apex of seventeenth century polyphony, and consequently the most ticklish problem for the orchestral transcriber. If there are any weak spots in the transcriber's technical equipment, counterpoint will expose them. The orchestrator cannot disturb the structure of the original, yet a literal translation will destroy the very *raison d'être* of an orchestral version. The transcribed fugue must be a distinctively orchestral work, yet this distinctiveness is not to be achieved with external ornamentation. To a great extent these principles extend to Bach arrangements of any kind; the varied methods of the transcribers in carrying them out provide the fascination of this branch of orchestral writing.

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## EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 82)

possible time, and it is this type of dealer whom we might be able to assist and thereby doubly serve our readers.

It is our belief that all record shops that stock the *American Music Lover* will take care of our readers' wants in a most satisfactory manner.

It is logical to assume that if the *American Music Lover* can assist the record buyer, it can also assist his dealer. Hence, if your dealer does not know the magazine, tell us about it. In this way, we can not only cooperate more fully with everybody, but can assist all who are interested in recorded music to cooperate better with each other.



# On Building A Practical Record Cabinet

By S. HAROLD SUPPLEE

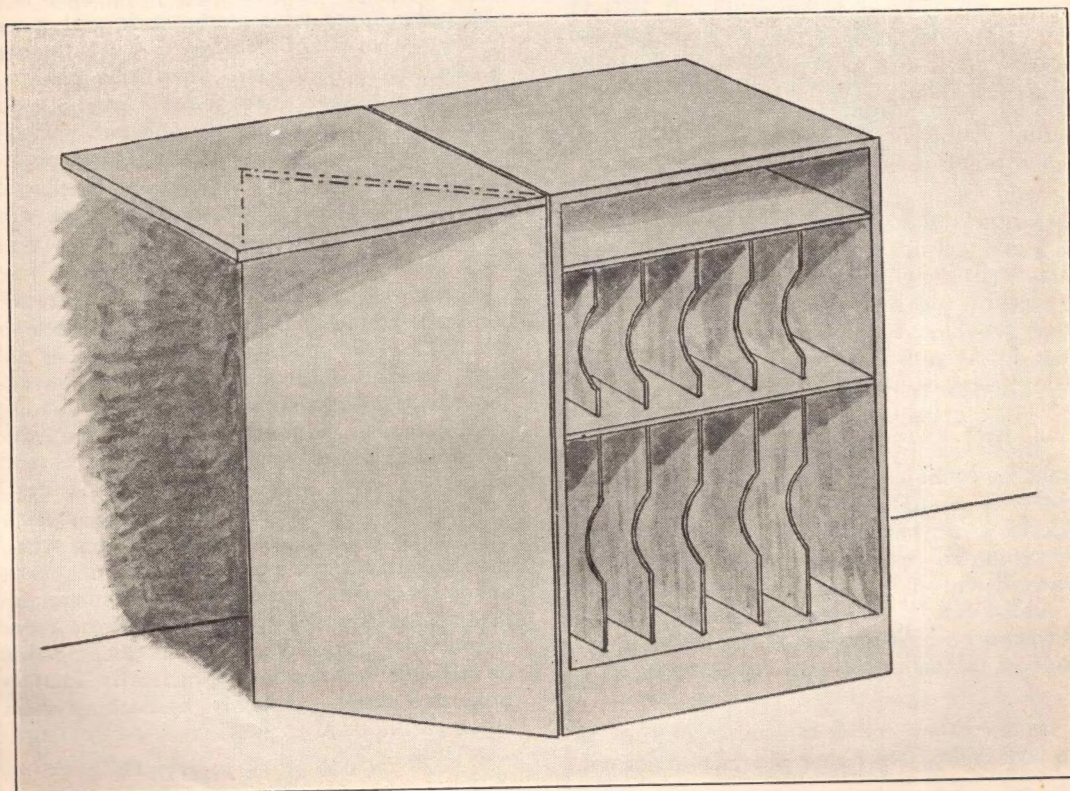
ONE of the satisfactions of visiting our record collecting friends is that we may sit comfortably and listen to pleasantly constructed concerts with no physical effort whatsoever. Meanwhile the particular friend at hand must struggle in the fashion that has so often been our lot.

He must delve in the recesses where it has been decreed he may store his records. The tops and bottoms of closets, odd shelves of bookcases, converted music roll cabinets and whatnots are hastily ransacked. Space does not always permit the luxury of albums and stacks and stacks of records must be flipped about to find special favorites. A perverse fate almost always seems to rule that for decorating purposes the only available table must be across the room from the phonograph. Sheer necessity forces the use of odd

surfaces of furniture for temporarily storing special piles of discs. The tops and seats of chairs and divans, end tables, mantlepieces, and accessible parts of the floor soon become littered with fragile masterpieces, and the antics of our friend more and more resemble those of a whirling dervish.

Expanding with the effect of music, my friend feels compelled to render a running patter of convictions, admirations, and critical analyses, meanwhile dealing records off his chest and treading the floor with the skill of a Scotch sword dancer.

For some reason, the companies that have been so prolific in turning out record playing machines have provided little room in their cabinets for records.





The few album cases on the market have practically no places to put your albums once you have taken them from the shelves. Besides, they are mostly designed for twelve-inch albums and have not provided protection for ten-inch records.

The greater part of our collection is racked on shelves built into a closet. Our immediate problem, however, was concerned with caring for the five or six stacks of popular ten-inch and classic twelve-inch discs that are more or less constantly in circulation. And it probably still would have been a problem had it not been that one day, in the midst of one of our own best concerts, while holding several editions of Mr. Goodman and his band in one hand, and a like number of Mr. Armstrong in the other, we tripped on a pile of Mr. Waller and ended up on the floor under a shower of Dwight Fiskes. When we had recovered financially from this Black and White fantasy, we set about eliminating the possibility of a future recurrence of such a catastrophe.

At first we reviewed with envy the neat shelves and partitions that are to be found in most record selling establishments, and gratefully borrowed some of their ideas. Our records would also be filed on edge, permitting the ready removal from any part of the stack without the danger of breakage and inconvenience of weight found in handling horizontal piles. Regular partitions would prevent stacks from falling over and also permit filing of special groups under the headings of orchestra, composers, etc.

Our next thought was to provide convenient and ample space for the special little piles that grow with every extended session of record playing. The racks would save some trouble. A couple of spaces could be kept for records "already played", and thus reduce surfaces needed.

The device finally selected was borrowed from the humble gate legged table. As shown in the illustration, a drop leaf hinged to one side of a conventionally shaped cabinet may be supported by a single door when swung outward and under. The ample surfaces thus provided can be softened by covering with a felt runner which may be stored in the upper shelf of the cabinet.

Double doors could, of course, be used to support a leaf on either side if so desired,

and dimensions altered to meet individual demands. The cabinet illustrated can be constructed for about \$25.00 to \$30.00. Conversions or home constructed cabinets will, of course, reduce expense.

The cabinet measured about 24 inches wide by 15 inches deep and stands about 40 inches in height. The side leaf has an area equal to the cabinet top.

The upper shelf, about 4 inches high, may be used to store stroboscope, extra needles, cleaning brush, spare tubes, etc.

The upper racks are  $10\frac{1}{4}$  inches high, while the depth is shortened by a false back to prevent the records from sliding in too far. The partitions, made of ply wood, are short of the shelf edge by 2 inches, and present a curved edge to facilitate grasping the records during removal or replacement.

The lower racks are about 13 inches in height to accommodate 12 inch records. Each rack can hold from 30 to 35 records without paper covers, making a total capacity for the cabinet of from 350 to 400 records.

If records are filed without paper covers, a small strip of wood  $\frac{1}{4}$  by  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch run along the upper edge of the shelf will serve to keep records from rolling out if the floor is not level. Better still, level the cabinet. The cabinet should be selected or built to match the phonograph, in wood and general design. Walnut appears to be the most popular. Portable type instruments can be placed on top of the cabinet. Double leaves are especially useful here.

Personal experience is the final test, but we have found that placing the cabinet to the left of the phonograph, when facing the wall, seems to provide the greatest convenience to right-handed persons. People owning a table model phonograph will find the cabinet doubly useful.

There is no use pretending that such a cabinet is a thing of beauty. In fact, when placed next to the phonograph, which as a rule is just as bad, it requires a grand piano or a battleship on the other side of the room to provide decorative balance. Once loaded down with records it is practically immovable, and can be disturbed by nothing short of an earthquake.

*(Continued on Page 116)*



# Mozart's Violin Sonatas

By NATHAN BRODER

**M**OST fiddlers are familiar with the Mozart violin sonatas, but music lovers who do not play the violin rarely hear them, since recitalists usually prefer to play Mozart's concertos, which offer more opportunities for virtuoso display. Far from being display pieces, the sonatas are true ensemble works; and in many of them, indeed, it is the piano part that predominates. The reason for this predominance will become clear if we glance briefly at the history of the violin sonata.

The earliest compositions that may be called, with some degree of accuracy, violin sonatas date from the latter part of the seventeenth century. In these the violinist had a more or less elaborate solo part while the keyboard player was given a figured-bass accompaniment which he had to "realize" in performance. This arrangement lasted well into the eighteenth century, but at about the middle of that century the practice of writing figured-bass accompaniments declined and it became customary to write out the full clavier part, giving the right hand melodic figures equal in importance to those of the violin, while the left hand supplied the bass. The result was a kind of trio, with the violin and upper register of the clavier furnishing the two upper voices and the lower part of the keyboard the third and lowest voice. Some of Mozart's earliest sonatas, written in 1763, are scored in this way. But the keyboard parts, freed from the bonds of the figured-bass system, became more and more elaborate, until the original relationship between the two instruments was reversed: the violin became the voice that accompanied the keyboard part. This arrangement may be seen in some of Mozart's sonatas dating from about 1780, and traces of it remain in the later pieces. Eventually, the later sonatas of Mozart established a balance between the two instruments that has governed the form down to the present day. But the title page of the

first edition of his sonata in B flat, K.454 (1784), reads (in French): "Three Sonatas/ for the Harpsichord or Pianoforte/ the third is accompanied by a Violin obbligato." Even in Beethoven's day works in this form were still called "sonatas for pianoforte and violin."

There is another reason for the infrequent appearance of Mozart's violin sonatas on concert programs. Let it be whispered here: There is no music that throws so fierce a light on the weaknesses of the second-rate fiddler's equipment — impurities of tone, lack of style, unevenness of finger-technic, all these become apparent at once in the process of reproducing Mozart's pure and transparent melody.

Of the 18 violin sonatas written by the mature master (there are 22 earlier works) only five have been available in complete recordings up to this month: the sonatas in C, K. 296; G, K. 379; and E flat, K. 481, all played by Simon Goldberg and Lili Krauss (Mozart Chamber Music Society, Parlophone); in B flat, K. 454, played by Erica Morini and Ludwig Kentner (His Master's Voice); and in A, K. 526, played by Yehudi and Hephzibah Menuhin (Victor). This month Victor issues a new version of the B flat sonata, K. 454, together with another work in the same key, K. 378, both played by Jascha Heifetz and Emanuel Bay.

In 1781 Mozart published a set of six sonatas, including K. 296, 378, and 379 mentioned above. No better comment can be made upon them than appeared in the contemporary announcement of this publication:

These sonatas are unique of their kind; rich in new ideas and in evidences of the great musical genius of the composer, very brilliant and suited to the instrument. At the same time



the accompaniment by the violin is so artistically bound up with the clavier part that both instruments constantly hold the attention, so that these sonatas require just as finished a violinist as a clavier-player. But it is not possible to give a complete description of this original work. Music lovers and musicians must first play through it themselves and then they will see that we have exaggerated nothing.

There is great variety in the music of the sonatas recorded. K. 296 is gay, with a lovely slow movement. K. 379 is full of pathos and drama; there is a broad and weighty introduction, and the whole first movement is quite Beethovenish in spirit. The Allegro itself is in G minor, Mozart's favorite key for music of passionate intensity. The romantic mood of the variations of this sonata points towards Schubert. K. 481 has the lyrical character common to many of Mozart's compositions in E flat. A phrase for violin in the development section of the first movement anticipates the subject of the fugue in the *Jupiter Symphony*. The broad catilena of the Adagio undergoes daring enharmonic modulations.

K. 378 is charming and unpretentious, while K. 454, in the same key, is written in a broader style. The first and last movements of the latter work contain passages of that chaste chromaticism that is so characteristic of the composer, while the last movement includes curious little rhythmic sections which may reflect the fad for "Turkish" music so popular in Mozart's Vienna (compare the similar figures in the *Overture to Die Entführung aus dem Serail*). There is an interesting story attached to the first performance of this sonata. Mozart composed it for the violinist Regina Strinasacchi. The night before the concert he had not yet written it out, although, as was his habit, he had composed the whole thing in his mind. She prevailed upon him to write the violin part, and took it home to study the following morning. Mozart appeared at the concert with some music sheets on which were written only the violin part and a few phrases and modulations of the clavier part. He set the paper on the stand before him and proceeded to play the whole work practically from memory. The Emperor sat in his box and peered in astonishment through his lorgnette at what seemed to be blank music paper on Mozart's stand. The concert was a great success.

The brilliant sonata in A, K. 526, displays Mozart's creative powers at their height. This sparkling music is full of gusto. The master is never for an instant at a loss for the new, the unexpected, the *right* thing to do. The finale seems to me the most magnificently resourceful movement in all the violin sonatas.

This sonata, the one in G, K. 379, the one in B flat, K. 454, and the one in E flat, K. 481 belong in that amazing group of compositions which represent Mozart at his greatest. There is another fine violin sonata, which has not yet been recorded — the E minor, K. 304. This sombre work has a sweeping first movement and a plaintive, lovely, minuet with an exquisite trio. It has the same restless, unhappy character as the A minor piano sonata, which was written at just about the same time — the Spring of 1778, in Paris.

It is to be hoped that the record companies will not keep us waiting too long for a recording of this masterpiece.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of The American Music Lover:

Like Mr. Miller, I too have wondered why the two-piano teams have avoided original music for this medium like the plague. Here is a chance, perhaps, for the Friends of Recorded Music. If copyright difficulties do not stand in the way, the Debussy pieces *En blanc et noir* certainly should be recorded. They are quite on a par, if not superior, to the Etudes; and are more individual than the chamber works of his last years. Many years ago the National Gramophonic Society recorded Arnold Bax's *Sonata* and *Moy Mell*. They were mechanically poor even in those days, but musically very much worth while. Although, I am afraid, Bax is not a name that is well known, there are many enthusiasts here and in England who would take this music to their hearts.

The Scriabine records by Miss Heyman are excellent in every way. It would be a shame if the Friends of Recorded Music did not publish some more of this music while the artiste is still in her prime. We should certainly have the *Fifth* and *Eighth Sonatas*, *Vers la Flamme* and the *Poème Satanique*, if nothing else.

By the way, Mr. De Weese finds a similarity between the main subject of Beethoven's Op. 78 and two other works of his, as well as the finale of Franck's *Violin Sonata*. Other than a rhythmic resemblance (four crotchets followed by a dotted minim) I fail to find any connection between the themes mentioned. Perhaps the hot weather has dulled my senses. I await elucidation with burning anxiety.

Sincerely,

H. S. GERSTLE.

N. Y. City, June 11, 1937.



# Musical News from Moscow

By EUGENE WEINTRAUB

**T**IKHON KRENNIKOV'S *Symphony*, the work which so pleased American audiences when it was performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy, is to be printed soon. The late W. J. Henderson wrote in the New York "Sun" the day after Ormandy played it: "The high level of the concert was attained by the introduction of a new symphony written by a young man who entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1932 and wrote his opus 1 the following year. It is without question the most promising work which has come out of Russia in recent years. This must be said with the music of Shostakovitch still fresh in the memory. A youth who already has so much to say that is good to hear and who knows so much about how to say it is to be watched".

Upon my arrival in Moscow I at once made arrangements to meet this composer. Together with Mr. Shneerson, the genial host of the Union of Soviet Composers (this gentleman, well-known to all Americans who visit Moscow, helps us over the rough spots) we sat for some three hours in the Krennikov apartment.

One of the first things Krennikov asked me to do was to put in order the number of his compositions. He received a program from Philadelphia and was surprised to learn that his symphony had been billed as Op. 34 when it should have been No. 1, Op. 4.

At present the composer is totally immersed in the writing of his opera *Solitude*, a drama in four acts, of which he has already completed two. This will be performed at the famous Marinsky Theatre in Leningrad and in Moscow by the Nemirovich-Danchenko group. The theme concerns itself with the Civil War (1918-1922); the libretto was written by Fiko after the novel by Werther. At present the Moscow Art Theatre is producing the play.

Krennikov played parts of his opera for us. It was an experience to hear him. He is an excellent pianist and also sings pleasingly. His personality is reflected in his music; he is in love with song and with life — an extremely musical nature, "filled with song the whole of the live-long day." Fortunately he also has a great talent for knowing just what to do with his song.

The music for *Solitude*, or rather, the arias we heard, are most beautiful in their lyrical expressiveness. The songs are simple in form and Krennikov has not weighted them down with startling harmonies. The opera deals with simple people, and while he does not use folk tunes or folk music, he tends to convey their "rhythmic and melodic vitality in my own language". Himself a son of peasants, Krennikov belongs to the soil and the people.

Krennikov was born in the city of Eletz, June 10th, 1913. Eight years ago he was brought to the attention of Gnessin, a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakoff. He has studied with Gnessin, Litinski, Newhaus (piano), and Shebalin. He was graduated from the Moscow Conservatory last year. He has written, besides the *Symphony*, a piano concerto, incidental music to *Much Ado About Nothing* (now playing in Moscow), a number of piano compositions, and some songs.

After his symphony was played in Philadelphia (Stokowski conducting) and in New York, Krennikov received many letters from American admirers. His fan mail continues to be quite extensive. But the young man is sane and serious; there is no danger of his falling prey to those worldly things which tend to sap the strength of an artist. Krennikov has power, an over-powering will to express the song within him; he is in love with life (I must repeat this statement, for it is this force which gives him strength), happy with his bride of six months, and is am-



bitious to fulfill a destiny which may lead him to the furthest star.

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Serge Prokofieff has finished two symphonic *Suites* from his unpublished ballet *Romeo and Juliet*. Mr. Alexander Yurovsky, assistant to the director of the Music Department of the State Publishing House, informs me that these two suites are being published now. The first will be ready by the end of this year and the second in the spring of 1938. The *Suites* comprise about seven separate parts.

Prokofieff has also given to the publishers his opera for children, *Peter and Wolf*. I also learned that his *Second Violin Concerto*, in three movements, is finished, but it has not been decided whether it will be published in Russia or abroad.

Miaskovsky's 14th *Symphony* was issued recently and the printers are now at work on the 15th. This symphony will be issued in the autumn of 1937. The 16th, played here last year, will be published in the early part of 1938.

Shostakovich had his 4th *Symphony* rehearsed in Leningrad recently, but was not satisfied with the results.

The vocal scores of two operas by Glière, *Shachsanem* and *Gulsara*, will be issued shortly. The overture to the last named opera will also be published separately.

Shaporin is to be represented this year by the printing of a very long work — a symphony in four movements, and by an opera *The Decembrists*.

Throughout Russia there is much activity in the field of musical composition. Much choral music is being written and a wealth of folk music is being collected and put in order. The Soviet Union is rich in folk music and the State gives her assorted nationalities every encouragement to perfect their folk art.

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On the way to the U. S. S. R., I visited Sibelius for the second time, on the 11th of May. I came unannounced, at about eight-thirty in the evening.

At this visit I was less bashful and hinted, many times, that I was after some news of his *Eighth Symphony*. But Sibelius has had a lifetime of experience in ignoring that which he has no inclination to answer. I told him that all who had come to Jarvenpää in quest of news of that symphony had failed.

I then told him all about our Walter Winchell and the talent he has for foretelling events. If he had been in Jarvenpää, I told Sibelius, he surely would have got some news of the *Eighth Symphony* — even if he had to bribe the maids.

Sibelius seemed to be interested in this American phenomenon and remarked that it would be excellent, since Walter had such a remarkable talent, if Winchell would come to Jarvenpää to tell him just when inspiration to work on the symphony was about to overcome him.

I did learn, however, that the composer is working very hard. He retires about three in the morning and rises very early, forever at work on his music.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of The American Music Lover:

I note that your British cousin *The Gramophone*, occasionally carries a letter in which the correspondent puts forth a plea for certain new recordings. He can have no illusions about the effectiveness of this plea, but evidently regards it as an excellent way of letting off steam.

I append a list of compositions which I should like to see recorded, reserving the right to maintain a lightly cynical attitude if they do not appear immediately, and the right to register immense surprise if they do.

I recommend for recording: the Beethoven *Diabelli Variations*; the Berlioz *Requiem* and sections of *Les Troyens*; Act Two or Three of *Meistersinger*; Schoenberg's song cycle, *Pierrot Lunaire*; the *Chinese Symphony* of Bernard van Dieren, who has no representation on discs at all; the *Amazing Mandarin* of Bela Bartok; most of the Strauss *Elektra* and perhaps excerpts from Berg's *Wozzeck*.

In the meantime it looks like rain.

Sincerely,

CHARLES CAMDEN.

Chicago, June 16, 1937





# Overtones

## How to Listen to Records

A FRIEND tells of a little old lady he knows who has for a long time been telling him of her great appreciation of recorded music. Questioned one day as to the kind of phonograph she had and the type of records she owned, she made a confession.

"I do not own a phonograph or any records. I listen to recorded music in different funeral parlors. There is a cool, peaceful atmosphere in these places which makes the music most enjoyable."

## Regarding Max Bruch

Pablo Casals, undoubtedly finding England a better place at the present time than Spain in which to make music, continues his work in the recording studios. With the aid of Sir Landon Ronald and the London Symphony Orchestra, he recently turned his attentions to Bruch's effusion on the traditional Hebraic prayer-tune, *Kol Nidrei*. Reviewers commenting on Bruch still labor under the false impression that he was a Jew, because he chose to write this work, founded on a Hebrew melody, for cello and orchestra. "He (Bruch) was too much at ease in Zion," writes W. R. Anderson in *The Gramophone*, "like ninety per cent. of all Jewish composers." If Bruch were living, Mr. Anderson would probably hear from him in no uncertain terms. Once in Berlin he sued a publisher who referred to him as a Jew, and won his case in a court of law. All of which is perhaps not very important today, any more than this work which he wrote on a Jewish theme, but there may be some who will be impressed with the composition.

Of more importance is the news that Pablo Casals has recorded Brahms' *Cello Sonata*, Opus 99, for this much neglected work is not only regarded as a better one than his earlier sonata, Opus 28, but is also considered to be one of the finest cello works ever written.

## Bach's Art of the Fugue

The newest recording of Bach's *Art of the Fugue* (*Die Kunst der Fuge*), referred to here last month (HMV discs — EH 1007-1016) is rendered by a string orchestra, assembled

from members of the Berlin college of music, conducted by Professor Hermann Diener. It is of interest to know that the arrangement of this recorded version of the *Art of the Fugue* differs from both Graeser's orchestral transcription and the Peters edition.

Prof. Diener, who is a violinist, is well known in Germany for his interest in and sponsorship of old music. At one time, we are told, he and Erwin Bodky, the harpsichordist, gave joint recitals of old music which were as highly regarded as the joint recitals of Busch and Serkin. It is unfortunate, if this is true, that Bodky found it necessary to leave Germany and make his home in Paris. (Bodky's artistry will be familiar to those who own *Anthologie Sonore* sets.)

It is to be hoped that Victor will release this new version of the *Art of the Fugue* in the early future, as advance reports of its qualities are very favorable.

## XVIIIth Century Arias

Two French HMV discs of old music, which bear investigation, contain an anonymous XVIII century *Air*, and two *Ariettes* by Scarlatti (disc No. DB5023), and *Airs* and *Madrigals* by Monteverde. Both are sung by Leila Ben Sedira, a soprano of the Opéra Comique, with authentic instrumental accompaniments.

## John Field Recordings

John Field's centenary, which we observed in our January issue with an article, has been recognized in a more enduring manner by a recording of one each of his sonatas and nocturnes. On English Parlophone discs Nos. E11322-3, Frank Merrick, English pianist, has performed *Sonata in C minor*, Opus 1, No. 3, and *Nocturne in A flat major*, No. 3.

Commenting on this recording, one English reviewer says Merrick does full justice to the music and the reproduction of the piano is excellent.

## New Giesecking Recording

After Giesecking's superb performance of Mozart's *Piano Concerto in E flat*, K. 271, any announcement of a new recording by him



of a Mozart work must be considered big news. His latest contribution in this line is Mozart's *Piano Sonata in C major*, K. 457. This is the famous sonata usually associated with the *Fantasia in C minor*, K. 475, which Franz Josef Hirt recorded for Polydor. It is to be hoped that Gieseeking will add the *Fantasia* shortly in another recording, as the two compositions favorably complement each other.

### Beethoven's Opus 18, No. 5

Beethoven's *String Quartet in A major*, Opus 18, No. 5 has been strangely neglected by the recording companies. During the Beethoven Centennial, it was the only one of Opus 18 left unperformed for Columbia by the Leners. This omission was never made up by the recorded performance of the Capet Quartet of Paris, for theirs was unfortunately a mediocre performance. Because of this, the fact that the Leners have recently recorded this work for English Columbia is welcome news.

Critical comment in England finds their performance "a beautifully pointed" one.

### Brahms' Sextet, Opus 36

The Budapest Quartet, with Alfred Hobday and Anthony Pini, have recently recorded Brahms' *Sextet in G major*, Opus 36.

### Chopin's First Piano Concerto

Arthur Rubinstein with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of John Barbirolli, has made a new recording of Chopin's *First Piano Concerto in E minor*, Opus 11. The thought of this work brings to mind what we have always considered a phonograph tragedy. We refer to the German Parlophone recording of this work made by Moritz Rosenthal and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Weissman, which failed to present the artistry of one of the world's greatest pianists in a favorable light. Although Rosenthal can and does interpret this work like few living pianists one would hardly be convinced of this fact from the recording mentioned. The fault, we feel certain, was in recording, however, and not in Rosenthal's feeling for and projection of this music, which in this case is seemingly badly out of focus. Frequently we are reminded how much like a camera a recording apparatus can be, for it can give us either a lifelike facsimile of the original or a badly distorted one.

The following was culled from a leading New York newspaper, in connection with the music, selected by the various members of both families, to be heard at the DuPont-Roosevelt wedding.

"The parents of the young people kept their selections of melodies on the sedate side, unless the bridegroom's mother's designation of Ravel's *Bolero* could be called an exception. Mrs. Roosevelt also picked a medley of Victor Herbert melodies, *Trees*, *To a Wild Rose*, and *The Blue Danube Waltz*." It's all in how you read it.

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### The Death of W. J. Henderson

MUSICAL criticism in America suffered a great loss in the death of W. J. Henderson, of the New York Sun. His passing on June 5th, at the age of 83, ended a long lifetime of strenuous activity in the cause of music. An erudite scholar, a penetrating critic, a brilliant reporter, Henderson's attitude towards his art could be summed up in a remark overheard at a recent lecture dealing with an esoteric problem in musicology. A friend having expressed surprise at meeting the busy critic there, W. J. H. replied: "Always glad to learn something."

While he covered all phases of music with authority and insight, his comments on singing and singers were an especial delight. He could describe a voice in such detail, with such clarity, so deftly and justly, while avoiding technical jargon, that the reader would fancy he had heard the voice. If you think such a word-picture is easy to draw, ask anyone who has tried it.

His reviews went right to the heart of the problem at hand, and they were written in a prose that was at once the despair and envy of his colleagues. The style was easy and muscular; there was not an ounce of fat on it. His extraordinary command of language allowed him to indicate plainly every gradation of approval and disapproval. While he was open-minded about every fresh manifestation of the art, his pen was quick to prick the bubble of pretense and of sensationalism. Praise from Henderson was praise indeed. How open-minded he was at the age of 82 can be seen in the cordial reception, discussed elsewhere in this issue, he accorded the work of an unknown young Russian composer.

His passing leaves a great gap in our musical life.



# Correspondance on Record Cataloging

To Mr. Philip Miller  
c/o The American Music Lover

I should like to congratulate you and The American Music Lover for opening the question of "record cataloging". The problem has been revolving in my own mind for some time, and lack of a definite standard for procedure has delayed my own cataloging of my record collection. May I add a few suggestions to your survey. Following your questions in order:

1. The main entry ought, I think, be the composer of the music. This card might very well be the standard "unit" with added entries superposed above the composer's name for the following: a. title; b. artist or conductor, c. form of composition, d. medium, e. accompanist, f. series or sets.

2. Cards with guide words seem to me to be very unprofessional. While they might be useful for an untrained librarian or amateur collector, they do not appear as finished as a properly organized catalog card. If your committee can set up a code or standard, this form of cataloging should be unnecessary. The sample card from the Carnegie College Music set appears neater and conforms more nearly with my personal conception of what a catalog card should be.

3. Most assuredly. A neat photolithographed or printed card available for a few cents apiece would be a very welcome convenience to the record collector. With the price of records as high as it is, I feel that the recording companies could very well give one such card with every record and make available additional cards at a nominal cost for those who wish to have added entries. I believe that the number of additional cards sold would pay for the free card issued with each record. Each firm could surely afford the expense of a professionally trained cataloger and printer. This would of course mean first setting up a code of cataloging so that there would be some similarity and system in the cards of various firms. Whether an independent firm could make a go of it in trying to supply catalog cards for record buyers is a debatable question. It would require a considerable volume of sales to keep the price down to a few cents a card. Would it be possible for several record manufacturers to subsidize a central cataloging agency? What are the possibilities of having the Library of Congress doing this cataloging and furnishing this service?

The other problem which seems worth considering is the question of classification and arrangement of records. There are several classification schemes according to (1) composer, (2) form, (3) medium, and possibly (4) an historical arrangement. My personal preference is the composer classification which would bring together all of the works of one composer. This method is described in an article in the Library Journal of February 15, 1937, p. 150-54, by E. L. Lyman of the Smith College Library. There may be those who prefer to have all records of music in a given form such as symphonies or sonatas brought together, and I can see the advantages of such an arrangement. This

method is described in another article in the Library Journal of June 1, 1937, p. 453-54, by D. G. Amesbury of the Minneapolis Public Library.

Since this is a matter of personal choice and does not change the cataloging procedures themselves, it can wait for discussion at a later time. I do hope that the American Music Lover will have an article describing more fully the various classification schemes in use at the present time.

In the meantime, I shall be looking forward to a definite code for the cataloging of records, and wish you and your committee every success in your undertaking.

Yours very truly,

MILTON A. DRESCHER.

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To the Editors of The American Music Lover:

I am very much interested in your article on Record cataloging. In my own card index I list the following entries: a. Composer, b. Title, c. Artist, d. Recording on the reverse (if any), e. Size (10-inch, 12-inch, two records, album, etc.), f. Date when purchased.

I should certainly buy printed cards, gradually, if such were obtainable for the two hundred or so records I now own. And I should be delighted to purchase such cards with new records.

Very truly yours,

EDITH A. STANDEN.

Philadelphia, Pa. May 26, 1937.

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The response to my article on Record cataloging has been most gratifying, and I wish to thank all those who have shown their interest by replying. The report of the committee on cataloging Phonograph Records was presented before the American Library Association on June 22, and will appear in the Library Journal.

PHILIP MILLER.

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## TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

(Continued from Page 83)

one as was done long ago when the selection was first played.

In the Peristyle each Sunday afternoon during the concert season is offered a free concert featuring Toledo musical talent. Local singers, individual musicians, and groups give their services free, while the Museum donates the use of the Peristyle and carries such expenses as the printing of programs. These concerts provide an opportunity for Toledoans to hear good music and for the artists to appear before the public under ideal conditions.



# Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in This Issue: A. P. De Weese, William Kozlenko, Philip Miller,  
and Peter Hugh Reed

## ORCHESTRAL

DEBUSSY: *L'Isle Joyeux* (transcribed by Molinari), played by Symphony Orchestra, and *La Soirée dans Grenade* (transcribed by Coppola), played by Paris Conservatory Orchestra, both direction of Piero Coppola. Victor disc 12033, price \$1.50.

**B**OTH these selections come from the odd sides of two recordings of Debussy's *La Mer* — the first, from the recorded version issued a half dozen years back, and the second from the newer version issued last year.

Debussy wrote both these pieces for piano, but since both own an "orchestral pianism," as Cortot terms it, they lend themselves to instrumental treatment. *L'Isle joyeux* was written in 1904, and published with *Masques*. It is not one of Debussy's greatest piano pieces, although it has atmospheric qualities recalling a Monet painting or a poem by Verlaine. Molinari's orchestration is effective, preserving as it does its musical grace and construction. It is said to have been requested and approved by the composer. This, the only recording of the piece, is not very good, dating as it does from a time when orchestral recordings were overloaded with bass and the range of dynamics was poorly observed.

*Soirée dans Grenade* dates from 1903. It is a far more convincing piece of music — one of its composer's most successful pictures of the Iberian peninsula. Coppola has arranged it effectively for orchestra, but its subtlety cannot be said to be preserved in the transcription. There are several piano recordings of this piece, the most recent being Giesecking's and George Copeland's. The one we prefer, however, is that made by Riccardo Vines (Foreign Columbia 15245D) who probably had the distinction of playing it the first time it was heard in public.

—P. H. R.

DELIUS: *Summer Night on the River*, played by London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia disc, 10 inch, price \$1.00.

**T**HIS is a re-recording of the companion piece to *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, which Delius wrote for small orchestra in 1911. Heseltine places these two works among Delius' finest orchestral achievements. Both are characteristic of the composer, elusive in mood and evasive in form, subjectively impressionistic, and harmonically plangent.

*Summer Night on the River* has a quiet beauty. It is not a work for everyone, for it is not realistic music but rather music of serenity and phantasy, with an otherworldliness typical of Delius. Its opening is purely atmospheric, a simple figure reiterated in the woodwinds and brasses over a long pedal point in the double basses. Then a short wayward passage for the strings, followed by a longer interlude of atmospheric character. This leads to a cello solo with woodwind obbligato (about halfway through the first record), which is echoed in turn by a violin solo. On the second side of the recording, the cello theme is taken up and extended by the solo violin, but higher up this time. The work continues in like manner with a final solo for single viola. The chromaticism of the background which the composer uses lends a sensuous, mystical atmosphere to the music. The ending is most carefully worked out, but because the music fades away, like a receding figure in a dream, several hearings may be necessary before one is fully aware of the composer's ingenious effects.

Sir Thomas Beecham, Delius' foremost champion, interprets this music *con amore*. It is pleasant to be able to say that the recording does justice to Sir Thomas and to the composer's nebulous scoring.

—P. H. R.



DUKAS: *L'Apprenti Sorcier* (3 sides); and FAURE: *Shylock — Nocturne*; played by Paris Conservatory Orchestra, direction of Philippe Gaubert. Columbia set X-75, two discs, price \$3.00.

A NEW recording of Dukas' clever scherzo will undoubtedly be welcomed. This is by far the best version of this popular work issued on records to date, and one of the best recordings from the Paris Conservatory Orchestra. Gaubert is in top form, and he gives a brilliant and finely poised reading here.

This work, it will be remembered, is a tone-picture of a ballad by Goethe. Its story concerns a mischievous sorcerer's apprentice who in his master's absence, decides to perform one of his miracles, that of having a broom fetch water for the bath. The broom, endowed with magic powers, obeys the apprentice's command, but when the bath is filled, the poor apprentice cannot remember the command to stop it. Finding that the house is being flooded, he proceeds to chop the broom in half, but this does not stay its progress for both parts of the broom now fetch water instead of one. In danger of drowning he calls loudly for his "lord and master," who arrives in time to save him.

Dukas' musical conception of this tale is a true masterpiece. It has spontaneity, humor and brilliance, and its orchestration is perfectly devised. It has long been considered a leading specimen of modern French music.

This new recording of the work is conspicuous for its wide range of frequencies and its veracious reproduction of the instruments.

The *Nocturne* on the fourth record face is the fifth of a group of incidental pieces which Fauré composed for a French version of Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*. It is a sensitively poetic piece, charming in its serenity and unobtrusive emotion. It is an odd side recording to remember, because its mood deserves to be fitted into another picture than that engendered by Dukas' scherzo.

—P. H. R.

DVORAK: *Slavonic Dances* Nos. 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 from Opp. 46 and 72; played by Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Vaclav Talich. Victor set M-345, five 10-inch discs, price \$5.50.

THIS is a companion set to Album M-310, in which the other eight dances from Opp. 46 and 72 were played by the same orchestra.

Dvorak certainly had the gift for simple sentiment and lilting melody, and his music assuredly owns the homespun, earthy qualities of the people. At heart he was always the peasant, and hence it is in music of folkish quality like the *Slavonic Dances*, which first established him with the public, that we find him most happily expressing himself. Although often slight in material, the dances are cleverly constructed, for Dvorak had a fine sense of craftsmanship and a wealth of melodic ideas. Most of the dances are cheerful in mood, but some are nostalgic in character and others quaintly sentimental. Variation in mood is created by constant shifting of keys in these pieces and clever little twists and turns in rhythm and thematic interweaving. The orchestrations, made by Dvorak himself, are all brilliant.

Dances No. 7 in *C minor* and No. 13 in *B flat minor* offer striking examples of the composer's ability to contrast his material. No. 7 finds its contrast in shifting tonalities and No. 13 in definite alternations of mood. No. 5 in *A major* is a gay and playful dance with an effective retard near the end, and No. 14 in *B flat major*, although sentimentally coy, is distinguished by some charming melodic turns. The notes accompanying the set in this instance refer to the "glittering dark eye in the darker face of the gypsy"; we did not know that the Bohemian peasant was related to the Hungarian gypsy. Dance 15 in *C major* — festive and gay, hardly needs to be commented upon, since it is the most familiar of all the sixteen. Dance 16 in *A flat major* is seductive and sweet, a sentimental affair, but one undoubtedly drawn from the hearts of the people.

The performance and recording of these dances is highly satisfactory. In fact, we believe these recordings are preferable to any others extant, not only because they are better reproduced, which is the case in part, but also because Vaclav Talich, a Bohemian by birth, feels and conveys their inherent spirit so capably and easily.



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MOZART: *Violin Sonatas Nos. 10  
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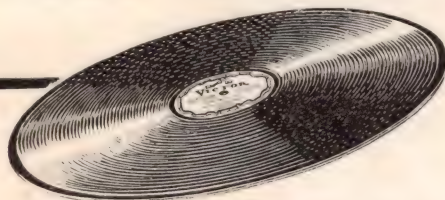
DVORAK: *Slavonic Dances*, Album  
No. 2, Talich and Czech Phil-  
harmonic Orch. (Album M-345)  
(Companion to *Slavonic Dances*,  
Album No 1, M-310)

BRAHMS: *Piano Quartet No. 2 in  
A Major, Opus 26*, Serkin and  
members of Busch Quartet —  
(Album M-346)

HANDEL: *Concerto No. 6 in B-Flat  
Major*, Harpsichord and Orches-  
tra (Discs 4363-64)

WALTON: *Facade Suite*, London  
Philharmonic Orchestra con-  
ducted by the Composer (Discs  
12034-35)

RCA Victor announces the release in August of Mozart's *String Quartet in F Major*,  
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—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

KETELBEY: *In a Persian Market*; played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction of Arthur Fiedler. Victor ten-inch disc, No. 4338, price \$1.00.

HERE is the good old "semi-classic" whose lush melody has provided the background for so many oriental scenes, and which has so often proven itself worth far more than its weight in applause. Surely this other composition of the creator of the *Monastery garden* is familiar to everyone, whether or not all of us know it by name. Nevertheless, I doubt if many of us have ever heard a performance of it to compare with this one. The Boston "Pops" Orchestra has been called the world's greatest light orchestra, and it seems utterly futile to dispute the claim. The recording here is as big and spacious as is habitual with the reproductions of this band. Therefore, anyone whose fondness for Ketelbey does not wane with the years (and how many such there are!) need look no further for the definitive *Persian Market*. But those with retentive memories had best be careful — the principal theme is a hard one to lose.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

MONIUSZKO: *Halka* — *Dance of the mountaineers*; *Jawnuta* — *Mazurka*; played by the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, direction of T. Mazurkiewicz. Columbia disc No. 68961-D, price \$1.50.

STANISLAUS Moniuszko (1820-1872) is referred to as the Polish Smetana, or Weber, or Glinka: he stands for the highest ideals of the nationalism of his country. Chopin, whose fame, of course, has always been international, acquainted the world with a kind of idealized Poland — a Poland for which he yearned, but of which he was scarcely a part. Moniuszko, on the other hand, remained at home and expressed the soul of a nation in which he had his being. The same is true of Smetana and Weber and Glinka — but there the resemblance between these men ends. Russia, Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia are near neighbors, but they are highly individualized nations. The irresistible gaiety of Bohemia, the deep gloom

of old Russia, and the incorrigible romanticism of Germany have little in common with the noble self-pity of Poland, yet as strong nationalists these peoples are all alike.

This record, which, coming from Poland, can be considered an authentic performance, presents a selection from the most famous and one of the most ambitious of Moniuszko's operas. *Halka*, which has taken its place as the symbol of Polish opera, is a work abounding in color and charm. The *Mountaineer dances* occur in the third act, and may be called a picture of Polish peasant life. *Jawnuta*, on the other hand, was the work which the composer considered his masterpiece, and which failed dismally, hastening the composer's end. There is little of the oppressed Poland in this *Mazurka* or in the *Halka* excerpt, but both abound in color and spirit.

The performance of the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra is an enthusiastic and competent one, if it cannot be called flawless. The recording is expansive.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

WALTON: *Facade-Suite*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of William Walton. Two Victor discs, No. 12034-35, price \$3.00.

WILLIAM WALTON seems to be the man of the hour; as recently as April Victor issued his *Portsmouth Point Overture*, and now the same company follows up with the orchestral suite, *Facade*. In its original form this work is described as "Entertainment for reciting voice and instruments," and the music forms the background for a string of verses by Edith Sitwell. When it was first performed in the Chenil Galleries in London, April 27, 1926, the poetry was read through megaphones by Miss Sitwell and Constant Lambert. Reviewing that auspicious occasion, Ernest Newman confessed that he had been highly entertained, and that in spite of a prejudice against the music of the youthful Mr. Walton, formed by an earlier hearing of a string quartet of his.

A recording either of part of that original performance (the whole is said to consume an hour) or of a similar one with the same speakers, was made by Decca some years ago, and has been one of the most popular items on that company's list. The emphasis, however, was placed upon the recitation,



and even so the words were hard to understand. When Sir Thomas Beecham last guested with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, he played the orchestral suite, and revealed the wealth of fun which lies in the music itself. And now this full-blooded recording, under the direction of the composer brings the subtleties and witticisms to us again.

The brotherhood of tune-detectives will probably rub their hands in glee over this music, but the joke will be on them. The work is simply brimming over with memories, but this is precisely what makes it so amusing. The high spot for me comes in the *Yodeling song*, where a typically Swiss tune (almost, but not quite *Uf en Bergli bin i g' sässe*) is played against a theme from the *William Tell Overture* and a fragment which sounds like *Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep*. Then at the climax is added the colossally appropriate *Every little movement has a meaning of its own!* Another magnificent moment is in the *Tarantella Sevilliana*, where the Spanish and Italian dance rhythms are played simultaneously, each going its unconcerned though scarcely placid way. This kind of humor is British in the best tradition, and the finest part of it all is that probably every listener will recognize an entirely different set of echoes. The only influence which seems to be there for any reason other than humor is that of Richard Strauss, from whom Walton has learned something about the use of instruments. And in the *Waltz* one expects *Rosenkavalier* any minute!

—P. M.

## CONCERTO

HANDEL: *Concerto for harpsichord and orchestra*, Op. 4, No. 6, in B-flat major; and *Sarabande and Gigue* from *Harpsichord Suite No. 11*; played by Mme. Roesgen-Champion, with orchestra, direction of Piero Coppola. Two Victor ten-inch discs, Nos. 4363-64, price \$2.00.

THE last year has seen the harpsichord come into its own as a recording instrument. What with Landowska, Yella Pessl, Ralph Kirkpatrick, and Ernst Victor Wolff all active in the studios, scarcely a month goes by without some addition to the lists. It is gratifying to note, too, that the greater part of this activity has been in this country. These two little records, however, come from France, where they first saw the

light several years ago. Aside from the particularly charming music itself, they bring us the harpsichord playing with orchestra, an especially happy combination for the phonograph, since it is possible to get a better balance in recording than one hears in the average concert performance.

This *Concerto* seems to have been an especial favorite with Handel, for he arranged it for harp as well as for organ or harpsichord. It first came to the wax in the harp version, on a Decca record made by Lily Laskine with orchestra. Many will prefer this harpsichord arrangement, as the instrument is a so much more agile one.

Mme. Roesgen-Champion, whose fame has reached these shores only by means of her recordings, does not play one of the brilliant and spectacular modern harpsichords. Nor does she bend her efforts toward showing what her instrument can do. Her playing is straightforward, and the melodies with which Handel packed the work emerge in their simplicity and strength. The orchestra, under the direction of the indefatigable Piero Coppola, is an appropriately small one, and does itself credit except for a couple of startling sour spots. In an otherwise excellent performance, one wonders why the records were passed with these blemishes. For the sake of the record (no pun intended) it should be noted that in the first repeat of the opening movement the introduction is cut. The loss is not a serious one.

The *Sarabande and Gigue* on the fourth side are taken from *Suite No. 4* in the second collection, to be found in Volume 2 of the Handel-Gesellschaft. By what count the labelers arrived at No. 11 I am not able to say, though it is safe to assume that it is so in some edition or other. Though the suite is written for harpsichord alone, the two movements are played here with orchestra. The *Sarabande* is like a miniature *Chaconne*: it is a set of variations on a tune bearing a strong resemblance to the celebrated theme of Corelli's *La folia*. The little *Gigue* makes a brief and appropriate close.

It is dangerous in these days to praise or criticize harpsichord recording, as feeling runs high, and opinions differ widely as to how the instrument ought really to sound. This reproduction has none of the organ-like resonance of the Pessl records, nor the brilliance of Landowska, but the instrument stands out well against its background, and the tone is a pleasant one.

—P. M.



## CHAMBER MUSIC

**BRAHMS:** *Piano Quartet No. 2 in A major*, Opus 26; played by Rudolf Serkin (piano), Adolf Busch (violin), Karl Doktor (viola), and Hermann Busch (cello). Victor set M-346, four discs, price \$8.00.

**T**HIS recording appeared in England several years ago at the time of the release of Brahms' *First Piano Quartet in G minor*, Opus 25. That the *G minor Quartet* was released in this country almost immediately after it was issued in England is not surprising because it is one of the most widely known of the composer's chamber works, and its outer effectiveness assures it instant acclaim. Why the *A major Quartet* was not issued subsequently we will never understand. True, its superior concentration of form, its greater depth of feeling, its greater musical subtlety, place it in a different category from that of the first, which undeniably owns greater spontaneity and is more direct in its conception and development. Yet, failure to release this work subsequently is not justified by these facts, and hence must be regarded as short-sightedness on somebody's part.

The two piano quartets and the great *F minor Piano Quintet* were all products of Brahms' late twenties. They represent a culmination of his youthful style, and a prediction of the essential qualities of his later chamber works. The first and second movements of Opus 26 are the finest. The scherzo has been described as dry, and the finale as diffuse. Both of these latter movements repay study, however, for, as Mason says, they reveal the growth of the composer's mastery of his art, and they return us to the greater movements with an enlarged understanding.

The first movement is quietly effective; it is not showy, even though its rhythmic structure is highly interesting. I fail to note any harsh, primitive elements in this movement, although some commentators have. The beautiful *Adagio* is the crown of the work. Here the mood, at first one of serenity, gives way to a rarely sustained poetic exaltation. "It combines the tenderest abandonment and sentiment," says Niemann, "in the softly subdued principle subject, which seems to sob with ecstasy, with great arpeggios on the piano, in which a whole world of supernatural forces seems to be stirring and surging up, spectral and threatening, beneath the motionless surface of the deep lake, lying dream-

ing in the sultry atmosphere of a summer night." As one grows to know Brahms more, the inspiration of Nature in much of his music is recognized more and more. After visiting the Lake of Thun in Switzerland, I have never been able to dissociate the beauty of that country from the violin and piano sonatas Opus 100 and 108, which were both written there. One suspects that the inspiration of the *Adagio* of the Opus 26 *Quartet* was derived from the lower Rhineland, which Brahms visited around the time that he wrote it.

The scherzo seems to me lacking in essential grace. It is angular in line, but cleverly made and it shapes itself easily in our minds. The last movement is tuneful, folksongish in its main theme, which Mason contends Brahms repeats too often, but there will be many who will like this rondo for just this and be happy that it does not eclipse the beauty and the depth of feeling sounded in the first and second movements.

The performance here is a very fine one. Serkin and Busch are son-in-law and father-in-law; their relation is dual, for their artistic personalities complement each other also. There is poise and sentient beauty in the playing here, and there is technical precision and musical sobriety. The recording is good despite the fact that it is several years old. All in all, in my estimation, a valuable adjunct to any chamber music collection.

The spacing of this quartet is almost ideal in the recording arrangement; each of the four movements occupies one of four discs. The breaks seem judiciously chosen.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

**DITTERSDORF:** *String Quartet No. 6 in A major*; played by the Perole String Quartet. Musicraft discs Nos. 1017-18, price \$3.00.

**K**ARL Ditters von Dittersdorf (née Ditters) (1739-1799), an almost forgotten composer today, was a contemporary and close friend of both Haydn and Mozart. A distinguished violinist, and a prolific composer in all musical forms, he was particularly "famous for his comic operas and *Singspiele*, mostly in German, which gave an important stimulus to the national drama." Pohl tells us he was a truly popular composer with a real feeling for comedy, vivacity and quick



invention. His position in Germany has been likened to that of Gretry's in France.

The wide acclaim given Dittersdorf in his day has led to the belief that he was more popular and more highly valued than Haydn. Admitting he was in a sense a rival of Haydn's, it is interesting to note, however, that Charles Burney, in his history written in the latter part of the eighteenth century, dismisses Dittersdorf with a single sentence, while he accords Haydn several pages lauding him as one of the greatest men of the period. Although Dittersdorf's music lacks the essential grace, the inventiveness and variety of Haydn's, it does not fully deserve its neglect today, as this quartet, we believe, will substantiate.

Of the six quartets of Dittersdorf published by Eulenburg in 1866, this, the sixth, is one of the less frequently played ones. The fifth quartet in E Flat major is the one performed most, and the first in D major is considered by many to be the composer's masterpiece in this form.

Cobbett regards Dittersdorf's quartets "as a pendant" to those of Haydn, and contends that his intimacy with the latter no doubt influenced his development as a composer. Certainly, there is a Haydnesque quality to this music, but this, we believe, is more idiomatic than imitative.

The sixth quartet contains only three movements: an opening *moderato*, particularly genial and friendly in character; a *Menuetto* divided between stately and mannered *larghetto* sections and charmingly contrasted capricious sections; and a finale, marked *presto*, which is sprightly and vivacious with dramatic effects reminiscent of the theatre, and some highly interesting canonical writing.

The Perole String Quartet gives a particularly inspired performance of this work; in fact their playing should contribute greatly to the establishment of the music's worth. The recording here is by far the best to date given this organization, considered both from a standpoint of balance and of tonal reproduction. As a matter of fact, the balance attained here is better than any we have heard of this quartet even on the radio. The record surfaces here are also better than usual.

The division of the movements has been deftly accomplished. The first movement occupies one and a half sides. The second is

divided between the remaining half side of the second record face and half of the third face; and the last movement occupies the last part of the third record face and the whole of the fourth.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

MOZART: *Sonata No. 10 in B flat major*, K. 378, and *Sonata No. 15 in B flat major*, K. 454, played by Jascha Heifetz (violin), and Emanuel Bay (piano). Victor set M-343, five discs, price \$10.00.

IN an article in this issue, Mr. Broder tells us about Mozart's violin and piano sonatas. An important point he brings out is the prominence given the piano in these works. In these recordings, it is unfortunate that those in charge did not observe this importance, for it must be admitted Mr. Heifetz is given undue emphasis here.

However, the artistry of Heifetz is well suited to this music, for, as the notes which come with the sonatas point out, these works are "designed more for a demonstration of musical elegance than for technical exploitation," which makes them that much harder to perform . . . "their very transparency exposes every possible flaw of composition

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and execution." Heifetz, fully aware of this fact, has sought to play this music in a straightforward manner; in fact, his understatement of it is at times strangely incomprehensible. Mr. Bay, his accompanist, renders the piano parts so well, we wish he had been given the prominence due his efforts as a co-partner; but, we daresay, a psychological reticence in his performance, owing to his position as an accompanist to an artist of Heifetz's calibre, would have made it difficult to realize that perfect balance, even had the recording attained it.

The clarity of the recording, the quality of the instruments, are unusually good, however, and since Heifetz renders this music with immaculate tone and fine precision, one's interest is sustained despite the lack of balance.

*Sonata No. 10* occupies two discs in the recording (Nos. 14326-27), and *Sonata No. 15* three discs (Nos. 14328-30).

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

MOZART: *String Quartet in F major, K. 590*, played by the Stradivarius String Quartet. Columbia set 296, three discs, price \$5.00.

**T**HIS is the last string quartet of Mozart.

Like its predecessors, K. 575 and 589, it is dedicated to Frederick William II, King of Prussia, whom Mozart met at Potsdam in 1789. The King was considered an accomplished cellist, and in his last three quartets Mozart therefore gave prominence to the cello part. The mission of these last three quartets, we are told, was to be "society music in the highest sense," which accounts for the difference in their characteristics as compared with the famous six dedicated to Haydn.

Cobbett finds that quartet the most capricious of the final three. The work abounds in dialogues between the various instruments, but more particularly between the first violin and the cello. Mozart does not sound any great emotional depths in this music, not even in his *Andante*, which has the added caption in parentheses, *Allegretto*. The same capriciousness, and even humor, heard in the other three movements, is retained here. The movement owes most of its inspiration to its structure, since it is in strict sonata form.

The *Menuetto*, in our estimation, is the most interesting part of the work. Here we hear dissonance, occasioned by the chromaticism in the first violin, which is unusual for its time. The *Trio* seems less impressive, but the movement stands out in our mind after the playing of the work. The finale sounds like a rondo, but is in reality a combination of the sonata and rondo forms such as Mozart used upon occasion. This movement sounds like a *perpetuum mobile*, and is played with great rapidity.

The Stradivarius String Quartet play this work with precision and technical proficiency. We dare say Frederick William would have kept his cello more prominent than d'Archambeau does, and the King's chief violinist would have been less pronounced than Wolfsohn. The quartet's homogeneity here is not too well evinced. Admitting, however, that the work features the first violin in part, it is not surprising to find it standing out prominently in the recording, but we cannot blame recording here for the cellist's lack of assertiveness, since his instrument is also featured.

In this performance, repeats are observed only in the *Menuetto*. Spacing — first and second movements take two sides each (discs one and two), *Menuetto* occupies side five of recording, and finale side six.

From the mechanical standpoint, the work has been competently realized. The numerous problems encountered in a recording studio — the maintenance of balance and the shifting tonalities in a work of this kind — seem to have been fairly well solved by the Columbia engineers. In the recording of a quartet, frequently the feeling is engendered that this has been accomplished better in one movement than in another; here, for example, the balance between the instruments seems better attested in the *Menuetto* than in the other three movements. How much of this is due to the composer, how much to the players, or to the engineers at the control board, one can never be certain. In this case, the difference is not sufficiently marked to detract from the recording of the rest of the work, and we dare say few will notice it.

This is the first time this quartet has appeared in domestic lists, although it has been available in a recording, made by the Budapest String Quartet, in Europe for a couple of years.

—P. H. R.



## HARPSICHORD

BACH: *Partita No. 6 in E Minor*; played by Ernst Victor Wolff on the harpsichord. Gamut Set No. 2, two 10-inch discs, one 12-inch disc, price \$4.00.

**H**ERE we have the first release of a new record company, whose aim is to give us reproduced music as it was written by the composer, not as it was arranged by someone else. Like Musicraft, Gamut will steer clear of transcriptions, too many of which clutter the catalogs of the record companies.

The renaissance of the harpsichord in the past two years in this country can be traced to the gifted work of the Austrian player, Yella Pessl, whose artistry has been exploited via NBC-Music Guild performances and Columbia records. This revived interest in the harpsichord deserves to be studied. Perhaps some of our readers would be kind enough to write and tell us what harpsichord music means to them.

Ernst Victor Wolff, whose artistry has been recently represented on Musicraft, places himself with this set in the front rank of recording harpsichordists. His performances here, although more solid and less brilliant than that of Miss Pessl in her recent recording of the *Second Partita*, and decidedly lacking in the lilting flow which we associate with the playing of Wanda Landowska, is nonetheless musicianly. For his attainments are both scholarly and certain. There is an intellectual sobriety to his playing, however, which confines its emotional scope.

The *Sixth Partita* of Bach is a fine work, one that will well repay close acquaintance. We spoke of the value of the *Partitas* several months ago; it will be remembered Bach wrote them, after taking up residence in Leipzig, to compete with his predecessor, Johann Kuhnau. They were undeniably written to satisfy public taste, but this does not say they are lacking in inspiration. There is, as we pointed out previously, a charm in their old-world quality that is particularly gratifying when they are played on a harpsichord. The *Partitas* are suites composed of an introduction, followed by a series of old dance forms and with an interpolated aria for contrast. The present work opens with a Toccata, in place of the usual Prelude or Overture, which occupies both sides of the twelve inch disc; this is followed by an

Allemande, a Courante, a Sarabande, an Aria, a Tempo di Gavotta and a Gigue, which fill the two ten-inch records.

The recording of this work has been admirably accomplished. The tone of the harpsichord is lifelike and resonant, and although it does not have the widest range of frequencies, it is not however lacking in requisite overtones. The surface of the records is generally "higher" than most commercial recordings, but is at the same time consistent.

The set is accompanied by a scholarly booklet, written by D. Wolfert, who is responsible for the recording.

—P. H. R.

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SCARLATTI, DOMENICO: *Fourteen Sonatas*; played by Yella Pessl. Columbia set 298, price \$6.00.

**H**ERE is consolation for those whose budgets have kept them from indulging in the Scarlatti album of Wanda Landowska. At the same time, here is an album which will interest possessors of that set, since Miss Pessl and Columbia have been careful to



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avoid any but previously unrecorded sonatas. For this we cannot be too grateful, because, though there were plenty of these pieces to choose from, such consideration is indeed rare.

It is neither necessary nor profitable to go to any length in describing the works of Domenico Scarlatti. His historical importance is inestimable, for to him more than to any other belongs the honor of establishing the modern pianoforte style. More amazing is the fact that though so many of his works make no more pretense to depth or expressiveness than they do to length, they retain their freshness and charm in a manner almost incredible. It is true, too, that here and there is an example of what MacDowell called "that higher order of program music which deals directly with the emotions." There is real poignancy, for instance, in the *Sonata in B minor, Longo 33*, and that in *B-flat major, Longo 324*, or in *A minor, Longo 324*. *Longo 108, in D minor*, is labeled *The Lover — passionate and sentimental*, and the music is certainly expressive of that kind of misery. There are frequent suggestions of Bach, such as that in the *Sonata in D minor, Longo 58* — which has a figure very like the opening of the *First Piano Partita* — and *Longo 238, in A major*, which is stylistically allied to the slow movement of the *Italian Concerto*. Then too there are plenty of lighter and gayer sonatas in this collection, the characteristic one in *F major, Longo 384*, with its rather breath-taking figure at the cadence; *Longo 107, in D major*, with its horn-fifths; and the *Neapolitan folk dance, Longo 205, in C major*. There is plenty of variety here, though some may feel there are too many sonatas for one sitting — in any case there is no law compelling us to play them all at once.

By this time Miss Pessl is too firmly established as a recording artist to render extended comment on her performance necessary. In this music she seems to be enjoying herself thoroughly, and the records certainly stand with her best. Her registration throughout the set is well planned for contrast and variety, and there are several opportunities to admire her delightful trill. The recording seems a bit less full than in some of her other offerings, which is in keeping with the music itself. The reproduction is very lifelike, and even the action of the instrument can at times be distinctly heard.

Finally, thanks are due for the careful labeling. It is certainly not customary to put the Longo numbers in recordings of Scarlatti, but it should be, and let us hope that this step forward will be followed in future releases.

—P. M.

## PIANO

DEBUSSY: *Children's Corner*, Piano Suite; played by Walter Gieseking. Columbia one 12-inch disc, No. 68962-D, and one 10-inch disc 17088-D, price \$2.50.

DEBUSSY'S daughter was born in 1905.

Although she was christened Claude-Emma, her father, we assume, called her Chouchou, since the dedication of these pieces reads — "To my dear little Chouchou, with her father's affectionate apologies for what follows." Claude-Emma took piano lessons, but she never was a child prodigy, so the fact that these two piano pieces were written and dedicated to her when she was four need not concern us. Whether she would have been a musician upon attaining maturity we shall never know because she died at the age of fifteen.

Cortot, who has already recorded these pieces, says that they are "so charmingly felt, so full of daydreaming and roughness and all the poetry of childhood, that they surpass anything ever written under the inspiration of similar subjects — except the *Kinderszenen* of Schumann, Moussorgsky's *Chambre d'enfant*, or Gabriel Fauré's *Dolly*, the last (to be found on Columbia records 9103M and 4120M) that lovely trio which plumbs untold depths of childish feeling, where intuition mingles with memory, and the tender smile of the onlooker is sometimes wet with tears."

The six pieces which make up this charming suite are almost too well known today to discuss them here in detail. Yet, there may be some who do not know the composer's intentions, so an outline will not be out of place. In this recording, the composer's sequence of the pieces is not followed, owing undoubtedly to exigencies of recording space. Disc 68962 contains on one side *Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum*, and *The Little Shepherd*; and *The Snow Is Falling* and *Golliwog's Cakewalk* on the other side. Disc 17088 contains *Jimbo's Lullaby* and *The Doll's Serenade*.



The first piece, *Doctor Gradus ad Parnasum*, is a humorous take-off on a child's struggle with the tedious complications of the piano studies of Clementi. The second, *Jimbo's Lullaby*, is the child singing and talking to her over-stuffed elephant, too big perhaps to clasp securely. The next, *The Doll's Serenade*, is a toy serenade. The fourth, *Snow Is Falling*, pictures the child watching the snow through the window pane. The fifth, *The Little Shepherd*, is another toy episode. And the sixth, *Golliwog's Cakewalk*, is a miniature satire. This latter piece is based on a tune which Debussy heard played by the Grenadier Guard in London, and is most cleverly conceived.

Gieseeking's performance of these pieces on records easily displaces Cortot's. The exquisite subtlety, the facile rhythmic patterns, are set forth here with sensitive touch and fine resiliency. And the recording is, in our estimation, rare piano reproduction.

—P. H. R.

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HAYDN: *Rondo* (From *Sonata in C major*); and BACH: *Chorale-Prelude—Allein Gott in der Höh, sei Ehr* (transcribed by Perrachio); played by Emma Boynet. Victor ten-inch disc, No. 4336, price \$1.00.

**E**MMMA BOYNET, favorite pupil and assistant of the famous pedagogue, Isidore Philipp, appears once more on the Victor lists, and in music which is far removed from that which she has given us before. Her crisp and clean style are particularly suited to recording, and mechanically the disc is a happy one.

However, her selections are fragmentary, to say the least. The Haydn movement is the finale of the thirty-ninth sonata, in the Riemann edition of that composer's piano works. It is cheerful and sprightly music, well worth doing, but, after all, only a half of the two-movement work. With so few of them recorded, the lover of Haydn's piano sonatas will welcome this disc with modified enthusiasm.

*Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr*, one of the many studies which Bach made on this fine old tune, is a *bicinium*, or two-voiced setting. For the sake of identification, it might be of interest to locate it as the one found on page 34 of Volume 40 in the Bach-Gesellschaft. To say that this transcription by Perrachio retains the atmosphere of the original would

## COLUMBIA — ISSUES —

### SET No. 296

MOZART: QUARTET No. 25, IN F MAJOR, K. 590. Played by The Stradivarius String Quartet (Wolfsohn - Pochon - Dick - D'Archangeau). On Three 12" records. (A First Domestic Recording)

### SET No. 298

SCARLATTI: FOURTEEN SONATAS FOR HARPSICHORD. Played by Yella Pessi (Harpsichordist). On six 10" records. (Thirteen Sonatas are First Recordings)

### SET No. 299

PALESTRINA: MISSA BREVIS (For Unaccompanied Choir) (Sung in Latin). Sung by The Madrigal Singers. Conducted by Lehman Engel. On three 12" records. (A First Recording)

### SET No. X-75

DUKAS: L'APPRENTI SORCIER ("The Sorcerer's Apprentice") (In Three Parts) with FAURE: SHYLOCK: NOCTURNE No. 5. Played by Paris Conservatory Orchestra. Conducted by Philippe Gaubert. On two 12" records. (A wonderful new "Full Range" Recording)

### 17087-D

DELIUS: SUMMER NIGHT ON A RIVER (2 parts). Played by Sir Thomas Beecham and The London Philharmonic Orchestra. (A "Full Range" Re-recording)

### 68962-D and 17088-D

DEBUSSY: THE CHILDREN'S CORNER — SUITE: Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum - The Little Shepherd - Jimbo's Lullaby - The Snow Is Dancing - Golliwog's Cake Walk and Serenade For the Doll. (In 4 parts). Played by Walter Gieseeking (Pianist).

### 17089-D

BARTOK - arr. Szekely: ROUMANIAN FOLK DANCES (In 2 parts). Played by Joseph Szigeti (Violinist) with Bela Bartok at the Piano.



COLUMBIA  
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New York City





be to stretch the truth, as the accompanying figure which runs through the composition is a jumpy one, and comes out on the percussive piano far more staccato than it does on the organ. Furthermore, the piano lacks the sustained legato of the organ in the chorale melody. As a study in touch the transcription is invaluable, but, though expertly played, it lacks the serenity of the original.

—P.M.

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SCHUMANN: *Papillons (Butterflies)*, Opus 2; played by Alfred Cortot. Two Victor discs, 10 inch, Nos. 1819-20, price \$3.00.

SCHUMANN'S greatness rests principally on his piano music. It has been considered an important landmark in the development of keyboard resources. It is in line with the wide disparagement of the music of the Romantic School that Schumann's music is neglected today, for he was one of the chief protagonists of that movement. Yet, despite its overlaid sentiment, Schumann's music, particularly his piano works, has considerable poetic individuality and grace, and upon occasion a definite ethereal charm.

*Papillons* is a series of short pieces written as a kind of sketch for the popular *Carnaval*, Opus 9.\* The theme of the first of these, heard after a short prelude, is repeated in the Finale. Its soaring octave passages will also be found in the beginning and close of *Carnaval*. Four of the pieces are on side one of the recording, three on side two, five on side three, while side four contains the "most ambitious piece of the set," a *Polonaise*, and the finale which opens with a "grandfather's" dance and closes *ppp* on a single note.

The contrast of the various sections is well devised, and the whole composition possesses a poetic delicacy in keeping with its title.

Cortot performs this music with complete understanding of its spirit, its capriciousness, and poetic elegance. His playing here shows more precision and care than in some of the other recordings which he has made in re-

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\**Carnaval* has been recorded complete by Rachmaninoff, Godowsky and Cortot (the last is available only on import). There is also an orchestral recording of this work, as used by the Russian Ballet, performed by the London Symphony, direction of Sir Landon Ronald (HMV discs DB1840-42). Both *Papillons* and *Carnaval* lend themselves to orchestral treatment and make ideal ballets.

cent years. Recording here is tonally good, and dynamics are sufficiently well marked, although the final *ppp* is not as soft as it might be. However, in a recording, such an exaggerated pianissimo via the piano would be of doubtful value.

—P. H. R.

## VIOLIN

BACH: *Sarabande and Double* from *Partita No. 1 in B minor* for unaccompanied violin, and *Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland* (transcription by Huberman), played by Bronislaw Huberman, violin, and Siegfried Schultze, piano. Columbia disc, 68940D, price \$1.50.

A FEW words, I feel, will suffice for this recording. To me, Huberman is at his best in the *Sarabande* and *Double* of the *Partita No. 1, in B minor* by Bach. His playing is even, without the blemishes of nervousness and faulty intonation found in some of his other recordings. Here he is both scholarly and artistic, his intonation is consistently good, and his bowing clean and even.

In Huberman's own transcription of Bach's lovely Organ-Chorale-Prelude *Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland* (transcribed also by Stokowski for orchestra), the performer is nervous, fluttering, and not quite certain of where to place his fingers on the fingerboard. His portamentos are annoying and unnecessary. His fade-ins and fade-outs of tone seem definitely inappropriate to the music of Bach, whose melodic lines are long and even.

The recording here is consistently good.

—W. K.

\* \* \* \*

BARTOK: *Roumanian folk dances: a. Bucimeana, b. "Poarga" Romanesca, c. Manuntelul; a. Jocul cu bata, b. Brail, c. Pe loc* (Arr. Szekely); played by Joseph Szigeti, with Bela Bartok at the piano. Columbia ten-inch disc, No. 17089-D, price \$1.00.

THIS release marks the reinstatement of an old friend in the Columbia catalogue. Formerly listed as 2293-D, it was unaccountably dropped from the list. Its reappearance at this time will at least serve to call attention to a recording of unique charm.

Aside from his position as one of the leading modern composers, Bela Bartok is known as one of the world's foremost authorities on folk music. With his friend Zoltan Kodaly



he has made exhaustive studies of the songs and dances of his own and neighboring countries, and published his findings in a number of different forms. The dances here presented were arranged by him as a set of piano solos. They emerge from this transcription as simple and straightforward music in which any lover of melody and catchy rhythm can find pleasure.

This little suite furnishes Bartok's friend Joseph Szigeti with some unusual concert material, and he is one of the minority among violinists who appreciate such favors. It need hardly be remarked that he makes the most of his opportunities. And if we did not know that the recording had already been here and gone some time ago, we might take it for a new release.

—P. M.

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WIENIAWSKI: *Souvenir de Moscou, Op. 6*; played by Yehudi Menuhin; piano accompaniment by Marcel Gazelle. Victor disc. No. 14352, price \$2.00.

WIENIAWSKI, the great Polish virtuoso, did a good deal of traveling in his day, and left us a series of musical memories in the shape of fantasies for violin and piano, which he designated as "Souvenirs". The one under consideration here would seem to indicate that he, like everyone else who visited Russia in the nineteenth century, was most impressed by that very famous melody, *The Red Sarafan*. A good three-quarters of the *Souvenir de Moscou* is given over to meditations on that really lovely old tune, with only a lively section, undoubtedly based on another genuine Russian theme, to finish the piece with a flourish. There is no great musical substance here, but technical display in plenty.

Surely, with so much first-rate music adorning the list of his recordings, Yehudi Menuhin should not be begrudged an occasional opportunity to indulge in such gymnastics as this piece affords. If he does not combine suavity with pyrotechnics in quite the same manner as does Heifetz, he remains beyond any shadow of doubt one of our greatest fiddlers, whatever the music he plays. His admirers will probably welcome this latest chance to see what he can do with fireworks, and aspiring students will do well to study his performance. The accompaniment of Marcelle Gazelle is well in the picture and solidly recorded.

—P. M.

## VOCAL

*Caucasian Melody* (Igor Gorin); and *Kasbek* (Caucasian Folk-Song, arr. by Nicolai Bolin); sung by Igor Gorin, with an orchestra directed by Nathaniel Shilkret. 10 inch Victor 4337, price \$1.00.

THE singing of these two Caucasian songs is fully as memorable as on the disc Gorin made a few months ago. This young Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer baritone has a top-notch voice of unlimited power and of full range, with a superb quality throughout. Seldom do we hear such a smooth *legato* and so mellifluous a *pianissimo*. And the singer has a temperament to utilize his gifts skillfully on records.

These songs, undoubtedly sung in Russian, reflect quick changing moods. *Kasbek*, here preluded by a instrumental strain from *The Rose and the Nightingale*, is a drinking song, named for a mountain peak in the Caucasus. The accompaniments by Shilkret's orchestra sound more Hollywood than Russian. The recording is uncommonly natural.

—A. P. D.

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CARPENTER, JOHN ALDEN: *On a Screen*; *The Odalisque*; and *Berceuse de la Guerre*, sung by Mina Hager, accompanied at the piano by Celius Dougherty. Musicraft 1016, price \$1.50.

THE intimate appeal of the first two songs (from *Water-Colors, Four Chinese Tone-Poems*) will probably be felt by the few rather than the many. As here sung they seem to be addressed to a small group of discriminating listeners, and not to a large concert audience. Both are fragile and delicately wrought. Carpenter's finely made exotic and impressionistic music catches the formalism of the little poems written by Li-Po and Yu-hsi, both 8th century Chinese lyric poets whose verses H. A. Giles has so sympathetically translated. Tortoises, birds in the reeds and rushes, light skiffs, buds on the flowers, and dragon-flies fluttering on the comb of a gaily dressed damsel are all conceits for the lover of pure poetry. Miss Hager is saturated with the moods of these songs, and her voice has a haunting, soft quality.

*A War Lullaby* we would gladly have given up for the other *Water-Colors*, which



did appear along with these on a now withdrawn disc that Miss Hager and Mr. Carpenter made for the Chicago Phonograph Society. The *War Lullaby* is a poignant expression of war-time feeling, but it now sounds dated. Emile Cammaert's poem tells of a mother whose thoughts waver between her child and her husband at the front. She wonders if he is sheltered from the wind and rain, if he has her last letter, and if he perhaps is running through shells, or, it may be, lying dead. It is a harsh picture. The singer's voice records too lightly for the climax and is further burdened with vibrato.

Miss Hager, an established singer from Chicago, is a friend of Mr. Carpenter's. She was a soloist some years ago in *Pierrot Lunaire* with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and she has sung on many of Wallenstein's broadcasts. Celius Dougherty is unrivalled as an accompanist for this kind of modern song. The recording is not up to the best commercial standards.

—A. P. D.

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DELIBES: *Die Maedchen von Cadiz*; and MOSZKOWSKI: *Liebe Kleine Nachtigall*; sung by Miliza Korjus, with an orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. Victor 12036, price \$2.00.

**C**OLORATURAS are so privileged a race that we allow them all kinds of prerogatives (which they do not fail to exercise) in their choice of repertoire. Thus once again we hear Delibes' Spanish song, a bolero, *Les Filles de Cadix*, which has indeed been more than a little overworked, and with it a vocal gilding of Moszkowski's piano *Serenata*, here sung as *Dear Little Nightingale*. Both have German texts.

Korjus's decorative abilities make the pill even palatable. The singing is so fresh, so clear, so graceful, so effortless, and so joyous that we shall accept it on these merits. The recording is clean and clear.

—A. P. D.

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*Molly Bawn*; and *The Palatine's Daughter*; sung by Robert Irwin, with piano accompaniments by Reginald Paul. 10 inch Victor 25590, price 75c.

**T**HIS record introduces a fine new baritone, Robert Irwin, a protégé of John McCormack's. Mr. Irwin recently sang these

songs on a *Magic Key* program, and Victor imported this disc in compliance with the many requests that were made for it. Mr. Irwin has a voice of beautiful quality, and a very clear enunciation; he seems to be a recording natural.

*Molly Bawn* (Lover-Liddle) is a frankly sentimental Irish love-song, and *The Palatine's Daughter* (Fay Sargent, arr. H. Hughes) is a light-hearted patter song of the encore type.

—A. P. D.

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HAYDN: *The Creation, With Verdure Clad*; and BISHOP: *Should He Upbraid*; sung by Dora Labbette, with orchestra conducted by Clarence Raybould. Columbia 9115-M, price \$1.50.

**T**HIS disc does not represent the best of Dora Labbette's singing nor the best possible rendition of either of the selections. The voice itself has the same beautiful quality which makes her Mimi in the recent Act IV *Bohème* so memorable, but her style does not here show the same careful coaching. The many retards are not in keeping with the pure classicism of the Haydn aria, and in several places the singer falls below the pitch. The Bishop song has many delightful touches, but is a trifle heavy. Greater precision in the coloratura would have given it the lightness and elation that are missing. The words are a free adaptation of Petruccio's speech beginning at line 171 in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act II, Sc. I.

The pure texture of Miss Labbette's smooth lyric soprano is admirably recorded. Hers is a voice of which we never tire; it has a roundness and softness that haunts the ear and leaves a memory behind it.

—A. P. D.

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PALESTRINA: *Missa Brevis*; sung by the Madrigal Singers, direction of Lehman Engel. Columbia set 299, price \$4.50.

**A**NY new Palestrina recording is worth investigating, especially when it brings us previously untouched material. It is good, too, to greet one of the masses, as the larger works have been given very little attention up to now.

The *Missa Brevis* was one of a set composed about 1570, and dedicated to Philip II of Spain. It is in four voices, except for the



last chorus, which spreads out into five. According to the custom of the time, the mass was based upon themes borrowed for the occasion from another composer: this time it was Goudimel who furnished the material, and his mass *Audi filia* was drawn upon. The title of the work is easily explained by its length, though one school of thought ascribes the name to the fact that the *Kyrie* opens with a breve. This mass is a characteristic and impersonal one, perfectly designed and executed, and admirably suited to the exalted atmosphere of the sanctuary. It is a good example of the principle upon which Palestrina worked — namely that with all the polyphonic weaving of the voices, the words should not be obscured. Anyone familiar with the text of the mass will have no difficulty in following the service in this setting. For all its aloofness, this mass is not lacking in drama of a certain sort — for instance the hushed utterance of the *Et incarnatus est* passage in the *Credo*, or the upward sweep (suggestive of a similar passage in Bach) or the first *Agnus Dei*.

The Madrigal Singers, who added this work to their repertoire during the past season, and won warm praise for their performance of it in New York, have succeeded in making a recording for the most part laudable and satisfactory. One is perhaps over-conscious of the tenors at times because of a certain hollowness in their tone, but generally speaking the balance is good and the choir sings well in tune. There is a startling moment near the beginning of the *Kyrie*, where a distinct break is made in the three upper voices, all in the middle of words, presumably to benefit the basses who enter at this point. Personally I can see no justification for such an effect. I miss the opening words of the *Credo* and *Gloria in excelsis*, which, though they are not in the setting of the mass, are traditionally intoned by the celebrant, using the old plainsong melody. The work seems somehow incomplete without these lines. A word of praise is due the solo trio, who sing the *Benedictus* simply and cleanly — especially the alto, whose voice is more than commonly luscious. This mass contains two *Agnus Deis*, the second of which starts off rather feebly in this performance, as though the singers were beginning to tire, but everyone pulls himself together and the work ends in fine style.

The effect of choral music of this school is considerably affected by the size of the choir which performs it. With a group of eighteen the massive style of a chorus of

two hundred is scarcely possible, but on the other hand there is a gain in clarity and flexibility. The recording has fullness and plenty of volume.

—P. M.

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ROSSINI: *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Languir per una bella*; and DONIZETTI: *Don Pasquale*, *Serenata*; sung by Luigi Fort with orchestra. 10 in. Columbia 4157-M, price \$1.00.

**R**OSSINI'S aria is a cavatina sung by Lindoro near the beginning of Act I of the opera. In exile as a slave for the past three months, he thinks of his home in Italy, and laments that he is far away from his beloved, even though he knows that she will be faithful until his return. The horns lend a nostalgic touch to the accompaniment.

Ernesto's serenade, *Com' é gentil*, from Act III of *Don Pasquale*, is given here without the chorus parts. "The April night and the moon breathe of love. Even the breeze sighs and the brook murmurs a reply. Won't you answer my song? If I should die, your weeping would be in vain, for then it would be too late."

Luigi Fort's voice has an unusually high tessitura, and he takes both of these arias with ease. The singing is characterized more by the precision of the intervals than by a warmth of style and a flowing line. Rossini and Donizetti should be less angularly sung.

The recording is clear and lifelike.

—A. P. D.

SCHUBERT: *Ave Maria*, and *Aufenthalt*; sung by Marian Anderson, with piano accompaniments by Kosti Vehanen. Victor 14210, price \$2.00.

**M**ARIAN ANDERSON stamps these well-known Schubert songs unmistakably with her personality. Both in voice quality and in points of style she differs from other singers. She sustains a smooth line, in which the turns are neatly integrated, in the *Ave Maria*, Ellen's prayer for the night, the words a translation from the third canto of Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*.

*Aufenthalt* (the label leaves the middle syllable out) is an austere song of exile and of woe, with as repetitious a set of words as you can find outside of Handel's oratorios. Miss Anderson's dark tones convey the sombre feeling, and she knows when to lighten and brighten the voice, as on such phrases as *Hoch in den Krönen* and *Brausender Wald*.



Kosti Vehanen's accompaniments are subdued. The recording is excellent.

—A. P. D.

## TOO LATE FOR REVIEW

The International Records Agency offers its clients the following Iragen records, which we shall review next month.

SIBELIUS: *Romance in D flat*, Opus 24, No. 9, and GRIEG: *Nocturne*, Opus 54, No. 4; played by Andre Skalski, pianist. Disc No. 2R-29-04.

MEDTNER: *Trois Nouvelles*, Opus 17: No. 1 in G major, and *Deux Contes*, Opus 20: No. 1 in F flat minor, played by Harry L. Anderson, pianist. Disc No. 2R-29-03.

HAYDN: *Eloquence*, and SZYMANOWSKI: *Master Musician, please play a waltz*; coupled with GOMOLKA: *Dokad mnie chesz pomniec*, and MONIUSZKO: *Knowst Thou the Land* (Goethe), and WALLEK-WALEWSKI: *Krakowiak* (Men's Quintet). All sung, except the Haydn, in Polish by The Music Makers, direction Andre Skalski. Disc No. 2R-29-05.

ALFVEN: *I Long for You*, and *The Forest Sleeps*, Opus 28; sung in Swedish by Helen Snow, soprano; and SCHUBERT: *Der Wanderer*, sung by Joseph Posner, baritone. Disc 2R-29-06.

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## SWING MUSIC NOTES

By ENZO ARCHETTI

Surely the outstanding swing event of the month of June was the first anniversary program of the Saturday Night Swing Club over Station WABC and its entire network. At Midnight on June 12, exactly one year after the first program was aired to a hopeful public and pessimistic critics who were already lamenting the death of a "swing craze," the Saturday Night Swing Club put over an hour and a half of solid swing which was not only one of the finest of its fifty-two programs but was also in the nature of a cavalcade of the entire year's events.

The broadcast took place from the Columbia Playhouse No. 1, in New York, which was jammed to the rafters with an enthusiastic crowd. A few minutes before twelve Paul Douglas, CBS's silver tongued commentator, welcomed the audience and reviewed the program to come ending by introducing those responsible for the success of the Club—Phil Cohan and Ed Cashman. Then the Swing Club Orchestra in full force opened the program with *Panama*, Leith Stevens directing.

The first guest to be introduced was Duke Ellington. His position as first on the program was

absolutely right for in spite of all radio, magazine, and theatre polls and such high sounding titles as *King of Swing*, *King of Jazz*, etc. he still is the one who in a less spectacular way has contributed the most to good jazz. Duke brought with him four of his men—Barney Bigard, Cootie Williams, Juan Tizol, and Harry Carney—who with Johnny Williams, drums, and Lou Shoo-be, bass, of the Swing Club Orchestra, played a grand performance of Duke's new tune *Frolic Sam*. Only one number, because Duke and his men had to get back to the Cotton Club (which, incidentally, was closing that night, or morning, rather) but that performance fixed the spirit for the evening.

Caspar Reardon on harp followed with a performance of *Ain't Misbehavin'* which, though good and admittedly swingy, somehow sounded a little dull after Duke.

In the early days of the Swing Club Raymond Scott's first composition — *Swing, Swing, Mother-in-Law* — was given its premiere. It had no title then. It was introduced simply as a swing fugue and the listeners were invited to suggest a title. The tune caught on immediately. From a deluge of letters *Swing, Swing, Mother-in-Law* was chosen and it has been known as that ever since. The Swing Club Orchestra played this number as the fourth item on the program in tribute to that premiere and Raymond Scott, for with that performance his star began to ascend to reach the zenith today with his famous Quintet and his equally famous *Twilight in Turkey*, *Powerhouse*, etc. Maybe that first deluge of letters had something to do with the screwy titles which are just as essential a part of each new Scott opus as the tunes themselves.

The Rollini Trio, consisting of Adrian Rollin on vibraphone, Frank Victor, guitar, and Haig Stevens, bass, followed with Rollini's own *Rebound*. But somehow it didn't click. Kay Thompson, that fine rhythm singer of radio fame, gave a very subtle performance of *It Had to Be You* which immediately bolstered the spirits of the audience again.

Following this came the first of the pick-ups. Bunny and his Band were relayed from the Pennsylvania Hotel in New York. An anniversary program without Bunny would have been the worst kind of a flop. Bunny's words of congratulations and his always swell trumpet work sent the crowd's enthusiasm up a few notches. Raymond Scott and his Quintet followed immediately with a fine performance of *Powerhouse* and then again another pick-up — this time the Casa Loma Orchestra from Los Angeles. The orchestra played with its usual precision piece called *Swingeroo* and Pee Wee Hunt, the orchestra's vocalist, sang *Sing, Brother, Sing*.

One of the most interesting novelties presented during the year of swing was Less Leiber, who played a celluloid life — of all instruments to swing on! But swing he did and he proved it again with *Crazy Rhythm* and *Nobody's Sweetheart*, much to the delight of the audience. Then the program leaped the Atlantic to Paris where the Hot Club of France Quintette waited to play *Djangology* and *Limehouse Blues* as a special salute to the Swing Club here. Neptune was kind and the program came through without atmospheric interference.

So far the Anniversary program had been practically a review of the year's programs but now a new number was given its premiere by the Swing Club Orchestra. Larry Clinton, the composer of

(Continued on Page 114)



# In the Popular Vein

By HORACE VAN NORMAN

AAAA—*Love Is Never Out of Season*, and *Our Penthouse On Third Avenue*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25591.

No band in the country is turning out as many really first rate discs these days as the Tommy Dorsey combine. In the first place, they are unqualifiedly the only band in the business that plays the hot and the sweet equally well. To compare him with his keenest competitor, Goodman, there is only one type of arrangement that Goodman plays surpassingly well, and that is a definitely swing arrangement. There is no such word in Goodman's vocabulary as "smooth" and every tune he plays, no matter what its original type, tends to sound somewhat the same, due to the unvarying similarity of treatment. Dorsey, however, playing sweet, smooth numbers and Dorsey going to town on purely rhythm numbers are in effect two totally different bands, but both are fortunately absolute tops in their respective fields. The two numbers under consideration are reasonably lively tunes, both from the film *New Faces of 1937*, but Dorsey keeps the rhythm supple and while they are extremely danceable and rhythmic, they avoid the rigid monotony of the average "swing" arrangement of a melody number.

AAA—*You Can't Run Away from Love Tonight*, and *The First Time I Saw You*. Emery Deutsch and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7894.

This is a fairly new group and an extremely promising one. Long known to radio audiences as a magnificent fiddler, as well as the perpetrator of that casual revision of Brahms' *Second Symphony* known as *Play, Fiddle, Play*, Deutsch brings his violinistic talents into full play and the result is an extremely sweet-sounding band if not a particularly original or striking one. Deutsch's excellent musicianship should keep his work well above the average, and this disc, along with several other recent discs by him, bode very well for his future as a dance bandsman.

AAA—*Toodle-oo*, and *The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down*. Russ Morgan and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7888.

There is a lot of highly amusing stuff in Morgan's arrangement of *Merry-Go-Round Broke Down*. The number itself is a completely meretricious affair that sounds as though it had been written in an attempt to pull another *Music Goes 'Round and Around* and all the competitive versions of it which I have ever heard are easily the most annoying records of the season. Morgan's treatment of it, however, is quite delightful and helps confirm this department's estimation of Morgan as one of the most satisfactory bands in the game.

AAA—*Mountain Music*, and *Good Mornin'*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25581.

More performances from Dorsey that are just as good as they could possibly be. The tunes are likely ones by Sam Coslow from the Martha Raye-Bob Burns vehicle, *Mountain Music*, and this swell band throws them at you with a smooth competence that makes for fine dancing and fine listening.

AAA—*It Had to Be You*, and *Exactly Like You*. Kay Thompson's Orchestra with her Rhythm Singers. Victor 25582.

Highly involved but thoroughly effective arrangements of a pair of oldsters, done in Miss Thompson's accustomed Chesterfield Hour manner. There is no possible denying the skill of the choral group. It is difficult to see indeed how this particular sort of work can be brought to a much finer degree of perfection than she has done here. As for Kay's own individual vocalizing, it is undoubtedly first rate work of its type. It just doesn't happen to be this particular guy's bowl of borscht, that's all.

AAAA—*China Stomp*, and *Rhythm, Rhythm*. Lionel Hampton and his Orchestra. Victor 25586.

The ever astonishing Hampton makes an amazing and quite incredible debut as a pianist in *China Stomp*. I am sure that no one in the world plays the piano in just the manner that Hampton does, for instead of utilizing all ten fingers, he confines himself to what I should imagine to be the middle finger of each hand, or possibly the middle finger re-inforced by the thumb, thus turning each hand into a little hammer, with which he pounds out the very same figures on the keyboard that we have been delightedly bending an ear to from his vibraphone for these many months. The simply unimaginable velocity with which he rattles over the ivories is something that has to be heard to be believed and certainly adds a new chapter, if a slightly screwy one, to the technique of the piano.

## INDEX FOR VOLUME 2 of The American Music Lover

An index for Volume 2 has been prepared for us by Mr. Enzo Archetti. It is now in the process of being printed and will be made available early in July. The price of the index, which will be uniform in size to the magazine, will be twenty-five cents a copy.



The reverse is obviously something which started out to be *I Got Rhythm* and then thought better of it. It is distinguished by the tenor saxing of Johnny Hodges and the clarinetting of (I believe) Mezz Mezzrow.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Remember*, and *Living the Jeep*. Red Norvo and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7896.

In the vibraphone-xylophone competition which is currently engrossing the swingsters, Norvo doesn't (and needn't) run second to any man. If he doesn't possess quite the breath-taking quality of Hampton and his flamboyant technical prowess, he more than makes up for it by the superior quality of his musicianship. His job on *Remember* is a fine example of how a very lovely tune can be "swung" in such a way that its original flavor and pattern is heightened rather than perverted beyond all endurance, as in the average arrangement of the sort.

\* \* \* \*

QAAA—*Caravan*, and *Azure*. Duke Ellington and his Orchestra. Master MA 131.

After a period of comparatively second rate Ellington, the Duke again gives us something off the top shelf in this release. *Caravan* is a quasi-Oriental item that bears the name of bandsman Juan Tizol, but we suspect that Ellington had more than a finger in its concoction, for it is an uncommonly skillful, colorful tone picture that is as different from the conventional output as Ellington's work always is. *Azure* is a nostalgic sketch in that particular idiom which places Ellington in a niche all his own among purveyors of popular music in America. No one in the world but the Duke could have conceived it and no other band in the world can play it with the complete comprehension and superb musicianship of his own group. Just as long as Ellington turns out things like this, he will be the matchless and incomparable figure in the American scene which he has been for the past decade, and which, I rather feel, he will continue to be for some time to come.

## SWING MUSIC NOTES

(Continued from Page 112)

*Satan Takes a Holiday* and *Whoa, Babe*, wrote a number especially for the event: *Swing Session Called to Order*. It went over very well with the assembled audience and it evidently made just as much a hit with the radio audience for it had to be repeated the following week on the Swing Club Program because of an overwhelming number of requests.

The first time Claude Thornhill sat in with the Swing Club, he played a provokingly interesting program. He chose a Bach fugue, a Chopin etude, and Rimsky-Korsakow's *Flight of the Bumble Bee* to prove that "serious" music could swing. First he played them on the piano — straight, as originally written. Then with the assistance of the Swing Club Orchestra he proceeded to swing them. The effect was electrifying. The effect was just as startling when he repeated the program on the Anniversary broadcast. But, was the disturbing after-thought, could he do it with any Bach fugue or Chopin etude?

The next pick-up brought in Benny Goodman's Trio and Quartet from Pittsburgh. The Trio played *There's a Lull in My Life* and the Quartet played *Nagasaki*. The result was excellent. Something

seemed to suggest all through these two numbers that soon they would appear on records. Then the program swang back to the Playhouse where Kay Thompson, this time joined by her splendid Rhythm Singers, sang *Whoa, Babe*. Among the Rhythm Singers we saw the group which has appeared individually on the air as the Blue Flames. Was this cooperation for that evening only or were the Blue Flames always a part of the Rhythm Singers?

The Swing Club Orchestra followed with an arrangement of Ellington's *Caravan*. The inclusion of *Caravan* on the program was justifiable because it had originally received its premiere on a Swing Club broadcast several months before by Duke Ellington's Orchestra. But to have tampered with Ellington's marvelous orchestration was unforgivable. As far as this writer is concerned, that number was a flop. It lacked both the mood and the swing of the original.

Carl Kress and Dick McDonough then played *Chicken a la Swing* and *I Know That You Know* as guitar duets in their own inimitable way. The Scott Quintet came forward again with *Twilight in Turkey*. A thought that struck us during this number was what an excellent alto player Dave Harris is. Here is a genuine hot player when he is given the opportunity to ride.

By this time the clock had spun around to within about fifteen minutes of the end of the broadcast and though there had been plenty of swing there had still been no real jamming. So to top off the evening Paul Douglas picked a group consisting of Johnny Williams, drums; Carl Kress, guitar; Pete Pomiglio, clarinet; Lou Shoohe, bass; Claude Thornhill, piano; Dave Wade, trumpet, and Dave Harris, alto sax, to jam *Three Little Words*. The result was so good that another group was immediately formed consisting of Manny Klein, trumpet; Dave Harris, alto sax; Dick McDonough, guitar; Claude Thornhill, piano; Artie Manners, clarinet, and Johnny Williams, drums, to swing a Blues in B flat invented on the spot.

That was a fitting close for the Anniversary program and a splendid greeting to the coming year of swing. May the Saturday Night Swing Club continue for many years to come!

A word of apology is in order for an error which appeared in last month's *Notes*. Bunny Berigan's spot on the air was stated as Saturday night, at 6:30. What was meant, of course, was Sunday night, at 6:30.

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# Record Collector's Corner

By JULIAN MORTON MOSES

"WHAT your column needs," a friendly collector says, "is some really good letters to provoke another controversy like the De Lucia affair."

Maybe that's so, but the type of correspondence I receive sometimes is almost revolutionary, and not everybody wants to give me the privilege of publishing their comments.

However, since the suggestion has been made, I think maybe it would be well to present a couple of extracts from letters. I have received that have been provocative. Maybe a few readers might like to say something, and not exclude their names from publication.

"...what do you mean by intimating that Gerville-Reache was pretty nearly the greatest contralto," writes one irate male reader. "She was not pretty near anything. What about Mantelli? Why Mantelli had a trill and a coloratura style that would have put the French singer to shame. Did you ever hear her *Rondo finale* from *Cenerentola*? I've never heard such sweet upper notes and such luscious lower ones, and I'm not getting sentimental either. Of course, Gerville-Reache did have beautiful middle and lower tones, but I never could hand her much for her upper ones."

Here's another extract:

"...you're crazy when you say that McCormack is a worthy singer of anything but *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*. And who cares if he's a worthy singer of that. Even if his *Pur dicesti* does warm up almost to a vibrato around the second *piacier*, do you think he ever warmed up to anything in his *Una furtiva lagrima* which you could say is good? If Adina fell for that frigid type of singing, it was only because she was paid for it..."

If anyone agrees with my first correspondent I refer him to Gerville-Reache's recording of the *Air de Tigre* from Massé's *Paul et Virginie*. Her high tones here are revelations, and equally as beautiful as her rich lower ones. As for McCormack's vibrato in *Pur dicesti*, I've always marked it as one of the

most perfect masculine trills ever recorded; and I have to admit that I did care, for one, that he was a worthy singer of such ballads as my correspondent mentioned.

Will somebody come to my rescue and substantiate me? These arguments about singers are enough to give a fellow gray hairs.

\* \* \* \*

BELLINI: *La Sonnambula, Son geloso*; sung by Galvany and De Lucia, with orchestra, and WAGNER: *Lohengrin, Mio Salvatore*; sung by Huguet and De Lucia, with orchestra. Int. Record Col. Club, disc No. 104, price \$2.25.

IT is doubtful whether in the period of recorded music the opening phrases of this duet from Bellini's delicate opera have been sung with more consummate artistry than that at the command of the great De Lucia. Neither this nor the reverse side, which would, I believe, have delighted Wagner in parts of the warning music, has been published before. They both, however, complete duets that were released in part and should therefore be in every collection.

\* \* \* \*

MEYERBEER: *Le Prophète, O toi qui m'abandonnes*; and CILEA: *Adriana Lecouvreur, Acerba volutta*; sung by Louise Homer. I. R. C. C. disc No. 103 (Auto-graphed), price \$2.25.

THE *Prophète* prison scene aria was among the first selections Homer made for the phonograph. It dates from 1903 and has a piano accompaniment. Her voice is more flexible and youthful here, but the same characteristics noted through her long career are also evidenced: the vibrant lower tones, the strident upper ones and the trill she did not possess. This is at the same time one of the singer's most satisfactory discs and certainly one of her rarest. On the other side, the singer does her best with an aria which harks back to Ponchielli.

(Continued on Next Page)



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7:30 P.M.—Columbia Concert Hall

(Continued from Previous Page)

VERDI: *Rigoletto*, *Tutte le feste al tempio*; sung by Sembrich and Sammarco, with orchestra; and *Rigoletto*, *Cortigiani, vil razza dannata*, sung by Sammarco. The Historic Record Soc. Address: 6613 Greenview Ave., Chicago. Disc No. 1005, \$2.25.

THE duet is a remarkable record. In it Sembrich achieves some of her finest singing and most pleasant tones. While Sammarco does not present an especially subtle *Rigoletto*, he sings with great enthusiasm and his voice is most opulent.

\* \* \* \*

SAINT-SAENS: *Samson and Dalilah*, *Vengeance at last*; sung by Homer and De Gogorza, and ROSSINI: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Largo al factotum*; sung by Emilio De Gogorza. H. R. Soc., 10 inch disc, No. 1006, price \$2.00.

DATING from 1908 and 1905, both selections have been cut out over twenty-five years and should therefore prove interesting to all collectors of this early period.

## On Building A Record Cabinet

(Continued from Page 88)

We occasionally dream of that future day when our record racks and the machine itself will be built into the wall, eliminating forever the complaints which we are forced to assimilate from time to time. But until that time comes, and our home life resembles less that of a discontented gypsy, we shall be thankful that the present cabinet has been so successful in solving the immediate record storage problem. And we pass on its construction secrets to others, hoping that it will solve their storage problems.



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**SCRIABINE:** Fourth Sonata; Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 7.

**ARIOSTI:** Cantata for Voice, Viola d'Amore and Piano. Lucile Dresskell, soprano; Miles Dresskell, viola d'amore; Sara Knight, piano. Disc 8.

**SCHOENBERG:** Klavierstueck, Opus 11, No. 2, and **SCRIABINE:** Flammes Sombres, Opus 73. Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 9.

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